The Hudson Review

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

WALLACE STEVENS' latest book is *The Necessary Angel*, a collection of essays.

ALLEN TATE has just returned from lecturing in Italy.

MILTON KLONSKY is a poet and critic who lives in New York City.

RICHARD CLAY is a young writer living in Connecticut and working in aviation. His story in this issue is his first published work.

HOWARD NEMEROV has a new book of verse scheduled for winter publication.

THOMAS STERLING'S novel, *Strangers and Afraid*, was published this summer by Simon & Schuster. He is now living in Rome working on a new book.

CAROL JOHNSON was recently graduated from the College of St. Catherine at St. Paul, Minnesota. This is her first publication.

A new book by HUGH KENNER, *Dublin's Joyce*, is to be published shortly.

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY has just been appointed director of the Museum of Non-objective Painting, New York City.

JOSEPH KERMAN'S *Beethoven: The Single Journey* appeared in the Spring 1952 issue of this Review.

GEORGE BARBAROW'S small book, *A Movie Primer*, has been turned down by several publishers.

An article by GEOFFREY RANS on English Literary Magazines appeared in the Spring 1952 issue of this Review. A reply by PETER RUSSELL, editor of *Nine*, is included in the present issue.

ROBERT HALSBAND, a member of the English Department of Hunter College, has edited Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *The Nonsense of Common-Sense*.

SIDNEY MONAS is writing a history of the Russian political police in the nineteenth century.

SONYA RUDIKOFF has written articles on Paul Klee and Gertrude Stein for this Review. She is now living in London.

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WALLACE STEVENS

To an Old Philosopher in Rome

On the threshold of heaven, the figures in the street
Become the figures of heaven, the majestic movement
Of men growing small in the distances of space,
Singing, with smaller and still smaller sound,
Unintelligible absolution and an end—

The threshold, Rome, and that more merciful Rome
Beyond, the two alike in the make of the mind.
It is as if in a human dignity
Two parallels become one, a perspective, of which
Men are part both in the inch and in the mile.

How easily the blown banners change to wings . .
Things dark on the horizons of perception
Become accompaniments of fortune, but
Of the fortune of the spirit, beyond the eye,
Not of its sphere, and yet not far beyond,

The human end in the spirit's greatest reach,
The extreme of the known in the presence of the extreme
Of the unknown. The newsboys' muttering
Becomes another murmuring; the smell
Of medicine, a fragrantness not to be spoiled . .

The bed, the books, the chair, the moving nuns,
The candle as it evades the sight, these are
The sources of happiness in the shape of Rome,
A shape within the ancient circles of shapes,
And these beneath the shadow of a shape

In a confusion on bed and books, a portent
On the chair, a moving transparence on the nuns,
A light on the candle tearing against the wick
To join a hovering excellence, to escape
From fire and be part only of that of which

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Fire is the symbol: the celestial possible.
Speak to your pillow as if it was yourself.
Be orator but with an accurate tongue
And without eloquence, O, half-asleep,
Of the pity that is the memorial of this room,

So that we feel, in this illumined large,
The veritable small, so that each of us
Beholds himself in you, and hears his voice
In yours, master and commiserable man,
Intent on your particles of nether-do,

Your dozing in the depths of wakefulness,
In the warmth of your bed, at the edge of your chair, alive
Yet living in two worlds, impenitent
As to one, and, as to one, most penitent,
Impatient for the grandeur that you need

In so much misery; and yet finding it
Only in misery, the afflatus of ruin,
Profound poetry of the poor and of the dead,
As in the last drop of the deepest blood,
As it falls from the heart and lies there to be seen,

Even as the blood of an empire, it might be,
For a citizen of heaven though still of Rome.
It is poverty's speech that seeks us out the most.
It is older than the oldest speech of Rome.
This is the tragic accent of the scene.

And you—it is you that speak it, without speech,
The loftiest syllables among loftiest things,
The one invulnerable man among
Crude captains, the naked majesty, if you like,
Of bird-nest arches and of rain-stained vaults.

The sounds drift in. The buildings are remembered.
The life of the city never lets go. You do not
Ever want it to. It is part of the life in your room.
Its domes are the architecture of your bed.
The bells keep on repeating solemn names

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In choruses and choirs of choruses,
Unwilling that mercy should be a mystery
Of silence, that any solitude of sense
Should give you more than their peculiar chords
And reverberations clinging to whisper still.

It is a kind of total grandeur at the end,
With every visible thing enlarged and yet
No more than a bed, a chair and moving nuns,
The immensest theatre, the pillared porch,
The book and candle in your ambered room,

Total grandeur of a total edifice,
Chosen by an inquisitor of structures
For himself. He stops upon this threshold,
As if the design of all his words takes form
And frame from thinking and is realized.

The Poem That Took the Place of a Mountain

There it was, word for word,
The poem that took the place of a mountain.

He breathed its oxygen,
Even when the book lay turned in the dust of his table.

It reminded him how he had needed
A place to go to in his own direction,

How he had recomposed the pines,
Shifted the rocks and picked his way among clouds,

For the outlook that would be right,
Where he would be complete in an unexplained completion:

The exact rock where his inexactnesses
Would discover, at last, the view toward which they had edged,

Where he could lie and, gazing down at the sea,
Recognize his unique and solitary home.

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Vacancy in the Park

March. . Someone has walked across the snow,
Someone looking for he knows not what.

It is like a boat that has pulled away
From a shore at night and disappeared.

It is like a guitar left on a table
By a woman, who has forgotten it.

It is like the feeling of a man
Come back to see a certain house.

The four winds blow through the rustic arbor,
Under its mattresses of vines.

Two Illustrations That the World Is What You Make of It

I

The Constant Disquisition of the Wind

The sky seemed so small that winter day,
A dirty light on a lifeless world,
Contracted like a withered stick.

It was not the shadow of cloud and cold,
But a sense of the distance of the sun—
The shadow of a sense of his own,

A knowledge that the actual day
Was so much less. Only the wind
Seemed large and loud and high and strong.

And as he thought within the thought
Of the wind, not knowing that that thought
Was not his thought, nor anyone's,

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The appropriate image of himself,
So formed, became himself and he breathed
The breath of another nature as his own,

But only its momentary breath,
Outside of and beyond the dirty light,
That never could be animal,

A nature still without a shape,
Except his own—perhaps, his own
In a Sunday's violent idleness.

II

The World Is Larger in Summer

He left half a shoulder and half a head
To recognize him in after time.

These marbles lay weathering in the grass
When the summer was over, when the change

Of summer and of the sun, the life
Of summer and of the sun, were gone.

He had said that everything possessed
The power to transform itself, or else,

And what meant more, to be transformed.
He discovered the colors of the moon

In a single spruce, when, suddenly,
The tree stood dazzling in the air

And blue broke on him from the sun,
A bullioned blue, a blue abulge,

Like daylight, with time's bellishings,
And sensuous summer stood full-height.

The master of the spruce, himself,
Became transformed. But his mastery

Left only the fragments found in the grass,
From his project, as finally magnified.

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Prologues to What Is Possible

I

There was an ease of mind that was like being alone in a boat at sea,
A boat carried forward by waves resembling the bright backs of rowers,
Gripping their oars, as if they were sure of the way to their destination,
Bending over and pulling themselves erect on the wooden handles,
Wet with water and sparkling in the one-ness of their motion.

The boat was built of stones that had lost their weight and being no longer heavy
Had left in them only a brilliance, of unaccustomed origin,
So that he that stood up in the boat leaning and looking before him
Did not pass like someone voyaging out of and beyond the familiar.
He belonged to the far-foreign departure of his vessel and was part of it,
Part of the speculum of fire on its prow, its symbol, whatever it was,
Part of the glass-like sides on which it glided over the salt-stained water,

As he traveled alone, like a man lured on by a syllable without any meaning,
A syllable of which he felt, with an appointed sureness,
That it contained the meaning into which he wanted to enter,
A meaning which, as he entered it, would shatter the boat and leave the oarsmen quiet
As at a point of central arrival, an instant moment, much or little,
Removed from any shore, from any man or woman, and needing none.

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II

The metaphor stirred his fear. The object with which he was
compared
Was beyond his recognizing. By this he knew that likeness of him
extended
Only a little way, and not beyond, unless between himself
And things beyond resemblance there was this and that intended
to be recognized,
The this and that in the enclosures of hypotheses
On which men speculated in summer when they were half asleep.

What self, for example, did he contain that had not yet been
loosed,
Snarling in him for discovery as his attentions spread,
As if all his hereditary lights were suddenly increased
By an access of color, a new and unobserved, slight dithering,
The smallest lamp, which added its puissant flick, to which he gave
A name and privilege over the ordinary of his commonplace—

A flick which added to what was real and its vocabulary,
The way some first thing coming into Northern trees
Adds to them the whole vocabulary of the South,
The way the earliest single light in the evening sky, in spring,
Creates a fresh universe out of nothingness by adding itself,
The way a look or a touch reveals its unexpected magnitudes.

Looking across the Fields and Watching the Birds Fly

Among the more irritating minor ideas
Of Mr. Homburg during his visits home
To Concord, at the edge of things, was this:

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To think away the grass, the trees, the clouds,
Not to transform them into other things,
Is only what the sun does every day,

Until we say to ourselves that there may be
A pensive nature, a mechanical
And slightly detestable *operandum,* free

From man's ghost, larger and yet a little like,
Without his literature and without his gods . .
No doubt we live beyond ourselves in air,

In an element that does not do for us,
So well, that which we do for ourselves, too big,
A thing not planned for imagery or belief,

Not one of the masculine myths we used to make,
A transparency through which the swallow weaves,
Without any form or any sense of form,

What we know in what we see, what we feel in what
We hear, what we are, beyond mystic disputation,
In the tumult of integrations out of the sky,

And what we think, a breathing like the wind,
A moving part of a motion, a discovery
Part of a discovery, a change part of a change,

A sharing of color and being part of it.
The afternoon is visibly a source,
Too wide, too irised, to be more than calm,

Too much like thinking to be less than thought,
Obscurest parent, obscurest patriarch,
A daily majesty of meditation,

That comes and goes in silences of its own.
We think, then, as the sun shines or does not.
We think as wind skitters on a pond in a field

Or we put mantles on our words because
The same wind, rising and rising, makes a sound
Like the last muting of winter as it ends.

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A new scholar replacing an older one reflects
A moment on this fantasia. He seeks
For a human that can be accounted for.

The spirit comes from the body of the world,
Or so Mr. Homburg thought: the body of a world,
Whose blunt laws make an affectation of mind,

The mannerism of nature caught in a glass
And there become a spirit's mannerism,
A glass aswarm with things going as far as they can.

Song of Fixed Accord

Rou-cou spoke the dove,
Like the sooth lord of sorrow,
Of sooth love and sorrow,
And a hail-bow, hail-bow,
To this morrow.

She lay upon the roof,
A little wet of wing and woe,
And she rou-ed there,
Softly she piped among the suns
And their ordinary glare,

The sun of five, the sun of six,
Their ordinariness,
And the ordinariness of seven,
Which she accepted,
Like a fixed heaven,

Not subject to change . .
Day's invisible beginner,
The lord of love and of sooth sorrow,
Lay on the roof
And made much within her.

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The World as Meditation

> J'ai passé trop de temps à travailler mon violon, à voyager. Mais l'exercice essentiel du compositeur—la méditation—rien ne l'a jamais suspendu en moi. . Je vis un rêve permanent, qui ne s'arrête ni nuit ni jour.
>
> *Georges Enesco*

Is it Ulysses that approaches from the east,
The interminable adventurer? The trees are mended.
That winter is washed away. Someone is moving

On the horizon and lifting himself up above it.
A form of fire approaches the cretonnes of Penelope,
Whose mere savage presence awakens the world in which she dwells.

She has composed, so long, a self with which to welcome him,
Companion to his self for her, which she imagined,
Two in a deep-founded sheltering, friend and dear friend.

The trees had been mended, as an essential exercise
In an inhuman meditation, larger than her own.
No winds like dogs watched over her at night.

She wanted nothing he could not bring her by coming alone.
She wanted no fetchings. His arms would be her necklace.
And her belt, the final fortune of their desire.

But was it Ulysses? Or was it only the warmth of the sun
On her pillow? The thought kept beating in her like her heart.
The two kept beating together. It was only day.

It was Ulysses and it was not. Yet they had met,
Friend and dear friend and a planet's encouragement.
The barbarous strength within her would never fail.

She would talk a little to herself as she combed her hair,
Repeating his name with its patient syllables,
Never forgetting him that kept coming constantly so near.

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ALLEN TATE

The Man of Letters in the Modern World[1]

An Oration

To the question, What should the man of letters be in our time, we should have to find the answer in what we need him to do. He must do first what he has always done: he must recreate for his age the image of man, and he must propagate standards by which other men may test that image, and distinguish the false from the true. But at our own critical moment, when all languages are being debased by the techniques of mass-control, the man of letters might do well to conceive his responsibility more narrowly. He has, as his immediate responsibility, to other men no less than to himself, the vitality of language. He must distinguish the difference between mere communication—of which I shall later have more to say—and the rediscovery of the human condition in the living arts. He must discriminate and defend the difference between mass communication, for the control of men, and the knowledge of man which literature offers us for human participation.

The invention of standards by which this difference may be known, and a sufficient minority of persons instructed, is a moral obligation of the literary man. But the actuality of the difference does not originate in the critical intelligence as such; it is exemplified in the specific forms of the literary arts, whose final purpose, the end for which they exist, is not the control of other persons, but self-knowledge. By these arts, one means the arts without which men can live, but without which they cannot live well, or live as men. To keep alive the knowledge of ourselves with which the literary arts continue to enlighten the more ignorant portion of mankind (among whom one includes oneself), to separate them from other indispensable modes of knowledge, and to define

[1]The Phi Beta Kappa Address, University of Minnesota, May 1, 1952. Excerpts from this paper were read at the International Exposition of the Arts, under the auspices of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, Paris, May 21, 1952.

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their limits, is the intellectual and thus the social function of the writer. Here the man of letters is the critic.

The edifying generality of these observations is not meant to screen the difficulties that they will presently encounter in their particular applications. A marked difference between communication and communion I shall be at some pains to try to discern in the remarks that follow. I shall try to explore the assertion: Men in a dehumanized society may communicate, but they cannot live in full communion. To explore this I must first pursue a digression.

What happens in one mind may happen as influence or coincidence, in another; when the same idea spreads to two or more minds of considerable power, it may eventually explode, through chain reaction, in a whole society; it may dominate a period or an entire epoch.

When René Descartes isolated thought from man's total being he isolated him from nature, including his own nature; and he divided man against himself. (The demonology which attributes to a few persons the calamities of mankind is perhaps a necessary convention of economy in discourse.) It was not the first time that man had been at war with himself: there was that first famous occasion of immemorial antiquity: it is man's permanent war of internal nerves. Descartes was only the new strategist of our own phase of the war. Men after the seventeenth century would have been at war with themselves if Descartes had never lived. He chose the new field and forged the new weapons. The battle is now between the dehumanized society of secularism, which imitates Descartes' mechanized nature, and the eternal society of the communion of the human spirit. The war is real enough; but again one is conscious of an almost mythical exaggeration in one's description of the combatants. I shall not condescend to Descartes by trying to be fair to him. For the battle is being fought, it has always been fought by men few of whom have heard of Descartes or any other philosopher.

Consider the politician, who as a man may be as good as his quiet neighbor. If he acts upon the assumption (which he has never heard of) that society is a machine to be run efficiently by immoral—or, to him a-moral—methods, he is only exhibiting a defeat of the spirit that he is scarcely conscious of having suffered.

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Now consider his fellow-citizen, the knowing person, the trained man of letters, the cunning poet in the tradition of Poe and Mallarmé. If this person (who perhaps resembles ourselves) is aware of more, he is able to do less, than the politician, who does not know what he is doing. The man of letters sees that modern societies are machines, even if he thinks that they ought not to be: he is convinced that in its intractable Manicheeism, society cannot be redeemed. The shadowy political philosophy of modern literature, from Proust to Faulkner, is, in its moral origins, Jansenist: we are disciples of Pascal, the merits of whose Redeemer were privately available but could not affect the operation of the power-state. While the politician, in his cynical innocence, uses society, the man of letters disdainfully, or perhaps even absent-mindedly, withdraws from it: a withdrawal that few persons any longer observe, since withdrawal has become the social convention of the literary man, in which society, in so far as it is aware of him, expects him to conduct himself.

It is not improper, I think, at this point, to confess that I have drawn in outline the melancholy portrait of the man who stands before you. Before I condemn him I wish to examine another perspective, an alternative to the double retreat from the moral centre, of the man of action and the man of letters, that we have completed in our time. The alternative has had at least the virtue of recommending the full participation of the man of letters in the action of society.

The phrase, "the action of society", is abstract enough to disarm us into supposing that perhaps here and there in the past, if not uniformly, men of letters were hourly participating in it: the supposition is not too deceptive a paralogism, provided we think of society as the City of Augustine and Dante, where it was possible for men to find in the temporal city the imperfect analogue to the City of God. (The Heavenly City was still visible, to Americans, in the political economy of Thomas Jefferson.) What we, as literary men, have been asked to support, and what we have rejected, is the action of society as *secularism,* or the society that substitutes means for ends. Although the idolatry of the means has been egregious enough in the West, we have not been willing to prefer the more advanced worship that prevails in Europe eastward of Berlin, and in Asia. If we can scarcely imagine a

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society like the Russian, deliberately committing itself to secularism, it is no doubt because we cannot easily believe that men will prefer barbarism to civilization. They come to prefer the senility (which resembles the adolescence) and the irresponsibility, of the barbarous condition of man, without quite foreseeing what else they will get out of it. Samuel Johnson said of chronic drunkenness: "He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man." There is perhaps no anodyne for the pains of civilization but savagery. What men may get out of this may be seen in the western world today, in an intolerable psychic crisis expressing itself as a political crisis.

The internal crisis, whether it precede or follow the political, is inevitable in a society that multiplies means without ends. Man is a creature that in the long run has got to believe in order to know, and to know in order to do. For doing without knowing is machine behavior, illiberal and servile routine, the secularism with which man's specific destiny has no connection. I take it that we have sufficient evidence, generation after generation, that man will never be completely or permanently enslaved. He will rebel, as he is rebelling now, in a shocking variety of "existential" disorders, all over the world. If his *human* nature as such cannot participate in the action of society, he will not capitulate to it, if that action is inhuman: he will turn in upon himself, with the common gesture which throughout history has vindicated the rhetoric of liberty: "Give me liberty or give me death." Man may destroy himself but he will not at last tolerate anything less than his full human condition. Pascal said that the "sight of cats or rats is enough to unhinge the reason"—a morbid prediction of our contemporary existential philosophy, a modernized Dark Night of Sense. The impact of mere sensation, even of "cats and rats" (which enjoy the innocence of their perfection in the order of nature)—a simple sense-perception from a world no longer related to human beings will nourish a paranoid philosophy of despair. Blake's "hapless soldier's sigh", Poe's "tell-tale heart", Rimbaud's nature careening in a "drunken boat", Eliot's woman "pulling her long black hair", are qualities of the life of Baudelaire's *fourmillante Cité,* the secularism of the swarm, of which we are the present citizens.

Is the man of letters alone doomed to inhabit that city? No,

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we are all in it—the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker, and the banker and the statesman. The special awareness of the man of letters, the source at once of his Gnostic arrogance and of his Augustinian humility, he brings to bear upon all men alike: his hell has not been "for those other people": he has reported his own. His report upon his own spiritual condition, in the last hundred years, has misled the banker and the statesman into the illusion that they have no hell because, as secularists, they have lacked the language to report it. What you are not able to name therefore does not exist—a barbarous disability, to which I have already alluded. There would be no hell for modern man if our men of letters were not calling attention to it.

But it is the business of the man of letters to call attention to whatever he is able to see: it is his function to create what has not been hitherto known and, as critic, to discern its modes. I repeat that it is his duty to render the image of man as he is in his time, which, without the man of letters, would not otherwise be known. What modern literature has taught us is not merely that the man of letters has not participated fully in the action of society; it has taught us that nobody else has either. It is a fearful lesson. The roll-call of the noble and sinister characters, our ancestors and our brothers, who exemplify the lesson, must end in a shudder: Julien Sorel, Emma Bovary, Captain Ahab, Hepzibah Pyncheon, Roderick Usher, Lambert Strether, Baron de Charlus, Stephen Dedalus, Joe Christmas—all these and more, to say nothing of the precise probing of their, and our, sensibility, which is modern poetry since Baudelaire. Have men of letters perversely invented these horrors? They are rather the inevitable creations of a secularized society, the society of means without ends, in which nobody participates with the full substance of his humanity. It is the society in which everybody acts his part (even when he is most active) in the plotless drama of withdrawal.

I trust that nobody supposes that I see the vast populations of Europe and America scurrying, each man to his tree, penthouse or cave, and refusing to communicate with other men. Humanity was never more gregarious, and never before heard so much of its own voice. Is not then the problem of communication for the man of letters very nearly solved? He may sit in a sound-proof room, in shirt-sleeves, and talk at a metal object resembling a

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hornet's nest, throwing his voice, and perhaps also his face, at 587,000,000 people, more or less, whom he has never seen, and whom it may not occur to him that in order to love, he must have a medium even less palpable than air.

What I am about to say of communication will take it for granted that men cannot communicate by means of sound over either wire or air. They have got to communicate through love. Communication that is not also communion is incomplete. We *use* communication; we *participate* in communion. "All the certainty of our knowledge," says Coleridge, "depends [on this]; and this becomes intelligible to no man by the ministry of mere words from without. The medium, by which spirits understand each other, is not the surrounding air; but the *freedom* which they possess in common." (The italics are Coleridge's.) Neither the artist nor the statesman will communicate fully again until the rule of love, added to the rule of law, has liberated him. I am not suggesting that we all have an obligation of *personal* love towards one another. I regret that I must be explicit about this matter. No man, under any political dispensation known to us, has been able to avoid hating other men by deciding that it would be a "good thing" to love them; he loves his neighbor, as well as the man he has never seen, only through the love of God. "He that saith that he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now."

I confess that to the otiose ear of the tradition of Poe and Mallarmé the simple-minded Evangelist may seem to offer something less than a solution to the problem of communication. I lay it down as a fact, that it is the only solution. "We must love one another or die," Mr. Auden wrote more than ten years ago. I cannot believe that Mr. Auden was telling us that a secularized society cannot exist; it obviously exists. He was telling us that a society which has once been religious cannot, without risk of spiritual death, preceded by the usual agonies, secularize itself. A society of means without ends, in the age of technology, so multiplies the means, in the lack of anything better to do, that it may have to scrap the machines as it makes them; until our descendants will have to dig themselves out of one rubbish heap after another and stand upon it, in order to make more rubbish to make more standing-room. The surface of nature will then be literally as well as morally concealed from the eyes of men.

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Will congresses of men of letters, who expect from their conversations a little less than mutual admiration, and who achieve at best toleration of one another's personalities, mitigate the difficulties of communication? This may be doubted, though one feels that it is better to gather together in any other name than that of Satan, than not to gather at all. Yet one must assume that men of letters will not love one another personally any better than they have in the past. If there has been little communion among them, does the past teach them to expect, under perfect conditions (whatever these may be) to communicate their works to any large portion of mankind? We suffer, though we know better, from an ignorance which lets us entertain the illusion that in the past great works of literature were immediately consumed by entire populations. It has never been so; yet dazzled by this false belief, the modern man of letters is bemused by an unreal dilemma. Shall he persist in his rejection of the existential "cats and rats" of Pascal, the political disorder of the West that "unhinges the reason"; or shall he exploit the new media of mass "communication"—cheap print, radio and television? For what purpose shall he exploit them?

The dilemma, like evil, is real to the extent that it exists as privative of good: it has an impressive "existential" actuality: men of letters on both sides of the Atlantic consider the possible adjustments of literature to a mass audience. The first question that we ought to ask ourselves is: *What* do we propose to communicate to *whom*?

I do not know whether there exists in Europe anything like the steady demand upon American writers to "communicate" quickly with the audience that Coleridge knew even in his time as the "multitudinous Public, shaped into personal unity by the magic of abstraction." The American is still able to think that he sees in Europe—in France, but also in England—a closer union, in the remains of a unified culture, between a sufficiently large public and the man of letters. That Alexis St.-Leger Leger, formerly Permanent Secretary of the French Foreign Office, could inhabit the same body with St.-John Perse, a great living French poet, points to the recent actuality of that closer union; while at the same time, the two names for the two natures of the one person suggest the completion of the Cartesian disaster, the fissure in the

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human spirit of our age; the inner division creating the outer, and the eventual loss of communion.

Another way of looking at the question, *What* do we propose to communicate to *whom?* would eliminate the dilemma, withdrawal *or* communication. It disappears if we understand that literature has never communicated, that it cannot *communicate*: from this point of view we see the work of literature as a participation in communion. Participation leads naturally to the idea of the common experience. Perhaps it is not too grandiose a conception to suggest that works of literature, from the short lyric to the long epic, are the recurrent discovery of the human communion *as experience,* in a definite place and at a definite time. Our unexamined theory of literature as communication could not have appeared in an age in which communion was still possible for any appreciable majority of persons. The word communication presupposes the victory of the secularized society of means without ends. The poet, on the one hand, shouts to the public, on the other (some distance away), not the rediscovery of the common experience, but a certain pitch of sound to which the well-conditioned adrenals of humanity obligingly respond.

The response is not the specifically human mode of behavior; it is the specifically animal mode, what is left of man after Occam's razor has cut away his humanity. It is a tragedy of contemporary society that so much of democratic social theory reaches us in the language of "drive", "stimulus", and "response". This is not the language of freemen, it is the language of slaves. The language of freemen substitutes for these words, respectively, *end, choice,* and *discrimination.* Here are two sets of analogies, the one sub-rational and servile, the other rational and free. (The analogies in which man conceives his nature at different historical moments is of greater significance than his political rhetoric.) When the poet is exhorted to communicate, he is being asked to speak within the orbit of an analogy that assumes that genuine communion is impossible: does not the metaphor hovering in the rear of the word communication isolate the poet before he can speak? The poet at a microphone desires to sway, affect, or otherwise influence a crowd (not a community) which is then addressed as if it were permanently over *there*—not *here,* where the poet himself would be a member of it; he is not a member, but a

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mere part. He stimulates his audience—which a few minutes later will be stimulated by a news-commentator, who reports the results of a "poll", as the Roman *pontifex* under Tiberius reported the color of the entrails of birds,—the poet thus elicits a response, in the context of the pre-conditioned "drives" ready to be released in the audience. Something may be said to have been transmitted, or *communicated*; nothing has been shared, in a new and illuminating intensity of awareness.

One may well ask what these observations have to do with the man of letters in the modern world? They have nearly everything to do with him, since, unless I am wholly mistaken, his concern is with what has not been previously known about our present relation to an unchanging source of knowledge, and with our modes of apprehending it. In the triad of *end, choice,* and *discrimination,* his particular responsibility is for the last; for it is by means of discrimination, through choice, towards an end, that the general intelligence acts. The general intelligence is the intelligence of the man of letters: he must not be committed to the illiberal specializations that the nineteenth century has proliferated into the modern world: specializations in which means are divorced from ends, action from sensibility, matter from mind, society from the individual, religion from moral agency, love from lust, poetry from thought, communion from experience, and mankind in the community from men in the crowd. There is literally no end to this list of dissociations because there is no end, yet in sight, to the fragmenting of the western mind. The modern man of letters may, as a man, be as thoroughly the victim of it as his conditioned neighbor. I hope it is understood that I am not imputing to the man of letters a personal superiority; if he is luckier than his neighbors, his responsibility, and his capacity for the shattering peripeties of experience, are greater: he is placed at the precarious centre of a certain liberal tradition, from which he is as strongly tempted as the next man, to escape. This tradition has only incidental connections with political liberalism and it has none with the power-state; it means quite simply the freedom of the mind to discriminate the false from the true, the experienced knowledge from its verbal imitations. His critical responsibility is thus what it has always been—the recreation and the application of literary standards, which in order to be effectively

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literary, must be more than literary. His task is to preserve the integrity, the purity, and the reality of language wherever and for whatever purpose it may be used. He must approach his task through the letter—the letter of the poem, the letter of the politician's speech, the letter of the law; for the use of the letter is in the long run our one indispensable test of the actuality of our experience.

The letter then is the point to which the man of letters directs his first power, the power of discrimination. He will ask: Is there in this language genuine knowledge of our human community—or of our lack of it—that we have not had before? If there is, he will know that it is liberal language, the language of freemen, in which a choice has been made towards a probable end for man. If it is not language of this order, if it is the language of mere communication, of mechanical analogies in which the two natures of man are isolated and dehumanized, then he will know that it is the language of men who are, or who are waiting to be, slaves.

If the man of letters does not daily renew his dedication to this task, I do not know who else may be expected to undertake it. It is a task that cannot be performed today in a society that has not remained, in certain senses of the word that we sufficiently understand, democratic. We enjoy the privileges of democracy on the same terms as we enjoy other privileges: on the condition that we give something back. What the man of letters returns in exchange for his freedom is the difficult model of freedom for his brothers, Julien Sorel, Lambert Strether, and Joe Christmas, who are thus enjoined to be likewise free, and to sustain the freedom of the man of letters himself. What he gives back to society often enough carries with it something that a democratic society likes as little as any other: the courage to condemn the abuses of democracy, more particularly to *discriminate* the usurpations of democracy that are perpetrated in the name of democracy.

That he is permitted, even impelled by the democratic condition itself, to publish his discriminations of the staggering abuses of language, and thus of choices and ends, that vitiate the cultures of western nations, is in itself a consideration for the second thought of our friends in Europe. Might they not in the end ill prefer the upper millstone of Russia to the nether of the United States? Our formidable economic and military power—which

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like all secular power the man of letters must carry as his Cross; our bad manners in Europe; our ignorance of the plain fact that we can no more dispense with Europe than almighty Rome could have lived without a reduced Greece; our delusion that we are prepared to "educate" Europe in "democracy" by exporting dollars, gadgets, and sociology—to say nothing of the boorish jargon of the State Department;—all this, and this is by no means all, may well tempt (in the words of Reinhold Niebuhr) "our European friends to a virtual Manicheeism and to consign the world of organization to the outer darkness of barbarism." But it should be pointed out, I think, to these same European brothers, that the darkness of this barbarism still shows forth at least one light which even the black slaves of the Old South were permitted to keep burning, but which the white slaves of Russia are not: I mean the inalienable right to talk back: of which I cite the present discourse as an imperfect example.

The man of letters has, then, in our time a small but critical service to render to man: a service that will be in the future more effective than it is now, when the cult of the literary man shall have ceased to be an idolatry. Men of letters and their followers, like the *parvenu* gods and their votaries of decaying Rome, compete in the dissemination of distraction and novelty. But the true province of the man of letters is nothing less (as it is nothing more) than culture itself. The state is the mere operation of society, but culture is the way society lives, the material medium through which men receive the one lost truth which must be perpetually recovered: the truth of what Jacques Maritain calls the "supra-temporal destiny" of man. It is the duty of the man of letters to supervise the culture of language, to which the rest of culture is subordinate, and to warn us when our language is ceasing to forward the ends proper to man. The end of social man is communion in time through love, which is beyond time.

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MILTON KLONSKY

Jack the Giant Killer

As I lay alone and bone-cold stiff in bed
  My dream was olive oil and fur,
But the stalk like an eel slipped through my head
  So fee-fie-foed and foamed with blood
    That I fell with a shudder
Of moons, waning in black and white
Spasms of darkness, spasms of light,
Waning and waking while the slow
Pulse of neon shone on my window.

O Mother light, light years away, the Bar
  And midnight sun for all your crowd—
Eccentric planets gathered to a star—
  I spied, behind the glass, their loud
    Hands like the deaf and dumb:
Junkies with jaundice; drunken jews;
A Djinn, two Gorgons, and a Muse;
Fey women and fairies in a mock-
Fight or cock-fight without a cock.

My dream, like theirs, dissolved into a stain,
  What could I do but join that swarm
Of eyes like darting little wasps of pain?
  Stung, I looked up, there stood the form
    Of malice cool and calm—
One of the mob from Bleeker St.
With cement under his two feet.
Odds and angles were all he knew.
F—— you was his How do you do.

I smelled the gas that holds the spheres apart.
  And smiled, gagging, smiled though I feared,
Knowing for him, and all like him at heart,
  Masses like him, that time had sheared
    The Golden Fleece of power—
Greece of her jewels, Egypt of bones,
And Memphis of colossal stones—

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The sheared Lamb turning on a spit.
And yet their teeth shall break on it.

Ah well, for all my blague, my one long shot
  On fame, niched in the dark—the juke
Box plays for him immortal jazz. And what
  If what he swills all night, turns puke
    At dawn? Now, here and now,
He wins all with his winning hand:
Cadillacs, greenbacks, cognacs, and
Girls skinny as Memlings, and girls
With breasts as round and smug as pearls!

Now, while he scowled and screwed his brows to size
  Me up and down, turning my stare,
A match he struck reflared upon his eyes
  And caught my image burning there
    (Lensed in an orange fire)
That blurred and puffed to disappear
Into the phantom eye and ear
Of echoes reechoing echoes,
Mirrors admiring mirrored rows.

Match-fire, beer-foam, and fear, fire, foam and foe
  Seemed like a dream's mirages mired
Deep undermind—but wisps and drifts as slow
  As smoke-rings, broken, arched and gyred
    Their hoops around and whole!
Then all my moons came out and shone
In rings of light cold and alone!
And white, white, burning in one white
Flash and open stare of insight,

I saw the blocks and symbols of New York
  Rising in tiers, higher and higher,
A stalk, a flower, and then another stalk
  Of smoke, blooming in orange fire,
    Twin bulbs and pods of fire,
And from these pods the seed of time
Drained downwards to a little slime,
The light blew out, and my full moons
Shrivelled and hung like spent balloons.

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All gone, all gone, O Mother now who'll buy
A fur coat of the beards of kings?
Who'll kill the Giant? Who'll clean the world's sty?
Stunned when she heard the news, the Sphinx
Burst into tears and died.
Who'll suck my narrow bones? Or sup
My soft eyes, boiled, in an egg-cup?
Who'll match my teeth upon a string?
I don't know, I don't know a thing.

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RICHARD CLAY

Very Sharp for Jagging

THE MIDGET CAR WENT BY THEM, scoot and scatter, spitting gravel as it raced and roared in the opposite direction like a tornado on a tear. It was a red car, not a full size car but a miniature red bolt of lightning, speeding across the Connecticut countryside, ripping up and down farmer's lanes, streaking down gravel drives, bumping over back roads, never daring to go out on the paved highways but invading privacy from behind like a quick red fox on a hunt.

Ben Stroud could still hear the unmuffled splitting roar that issued from the tiny machine that was no more than a toy. He leaned urgently forward and touched the shoulder of Frank's forest green uniform so that Frank stopped the limousine on the drive with a slow easy motion and a quiet crunching of gravel.

"It's them boys," Frank said, turning his round face towards the back seat and grinning. "They all got the devil in them nowadays."

Ben was half up on the seat peering out the rear window and feeling dizzy and short of breath from the sudden exertion of climbing up like this on the soft upholstered seat which he never would have done at his age if he had been fully awake when the red car went by with a thunderous racket like the Twentieth Century Limited at a grade crossing, throbbing so that it woke him from his nap and made him touch Frank's shoulder as if for an emergency and made him climb up on his knees on the seat all in one motion without thinking so that when he did begin to think he found himself peering out the rear window at the small red racer scooting away down his drive and gleaming hotly in the September sunlight as it turned off his private driveway and skidded in a cloud of pink dust on the logging road and bumped and flashed through the trees and disappeared behind clumps of yellow green bushes and appeared again, flashing red and gleaming, always a bit further away towards the wall at the edge of his property and finally disappeared through the opening in the wall into the deep maple wood on Chris Faith's side of

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the line. For a moment before it went out of sight some trick of the distance made Ben think that it was a big car like the red Stutz that his son Warren owned before he went to Europe last year. But he knew that was ridiculous because his senses and his memory told him that it was nothing but a midget car such as a boy might drive, such as his only grandson Harold might drive in two years when he would be twelve as Jackie Faith had been twelve in August when he got the red car from Chris Faith for his birthday. The whole neighborhood had heard about the red car and soon learned about it from its eyes and ears and was scandalized, as Ben knew, not just at a boy of twelve having a car but at the sudden unpleasant reminder of restlessness and a heedless tempo from which they had sought refuge here in the country and which was being violated now daily and invaded by the red racer tearing up and down their back lanes and their private drives and across their lawns.

"It's not 'them boys', Frank," Ben corrected, settling back into the seat. "It's only Jackie Faith with the fire-breathing hounds of Beelzebub burning inside of him or not more than two feet behind his tail."

"I didn't mean that all the boys were in that red car, Mr. Stroud." Frank spoke deliberately and slowly and somewhat grievously like a farmer. "I could see very well that it was only Jackie Faith. But I meant to say that Roy and Master Harold have the same devil's itch as Jackie has, as you might say. Roy told me at supper last night that Master Harold is fair wild to get a midget racer like that for his birthday next week. He's got plans to speak to you about it, sir, so I'd be obliged if you didn't say I told you anything about the scheme."

"Plans to speak to me about it—by Heaven, do you think it's a secret, Frank? Do you think it's a secret when he hasn't talked about anything else for a month? In the name of Jupiter I'm sick of hearing about that car, and I'm twice as sick of hearing it buzz around my place like a hornet all day so that I can't even come home from the city for a quiet Saturday lunch without having the blasted thing almost crash into me on my own drive."

Frank tilted the black visor of his chauffeur's cap upwards like a lifted lid on a pot and scratched the forelock of his ginger hair with the little finger of the same hand that held the cap.

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"That Jackie Faith is a wild enough youngster, I must admit," he said. He had a slow manner of speaking in a soft uninflected voice which added an air of deliberation and homely wisdom to his words. "He's been known as a wild youngster ever since I first remember hearing that he kicked his biddy on the beach and had to be carried home. But boys like Master Harold and Roy are different; they may be a bit wild but there's no mischief in them, Mr. Stroud. If you were to ask me I would say don't judge Master Harold by what you see of Jackie Faith and don't judge of how Master Harold would treat a nice car of his own by the way Jackie treats—"

"Don't be an ass, man," Ben interrupted irritably. "Look what happened to that brand new bicycle I got him. He had it exactly three days before he smashed it into the wall; an accident, he said. He has too many accidents. Look at the electric train he wrecked just because he wanted to see if the engine could knock the cars off of the track; and before that there was the wagon; and a dozen other things. He can't keep a blessed thing long enough to even let it wear out decently. What would he do with a car, I ask you? He and that Jackie! I can see them racing each other up and down my drive and skidding across my grass. By Heaven, it would be a roman circus, a regular roman circus, and he'd wrap the car around one of those damned elm trees the first day, and himself too, God bless him."

Frank's milk blue eyes sparkled. "God bless them all," he said impulsively and then he grinned so that his plump face looked like a rosy red moon. It was a grin that Ben had loved for its bouyancy when they were both younger but which annoyed him now because it seemed so vapid and foolish as if all you had to do was mention boys and Frank said "God bless them all" and delivered a round grin like a plate at the automat. It was not very rewarding or very helpful, and it seemed particularly sad when Ben reflected that his chauffeur was one of the very few people with whom he could discuss the problems of bringing up Harold, since his partners and the others that he knew intimately in the investment business were all grandfathers, like himself, but with the difference that they saw their grandchildren only on occasional carefree visits and did not have to make the constant tiresome day to day decisions about them.

"God bless them all," Frank said again. "It's a feeling I have

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about them boys, Mr. Stroud, a religious kind of feeling that God looks after them much better than we mortals can ever do, so it's a bit—what you might call—prezuntious for us to try to do all the planning for them. We have to leave room for God to make his plans, as you might say. Like if God should choose to take one of them boys unto his bosom today or tomorrow or anytime, we could not stop the rotten branch from falling on the boy or hold back the thunderbolt from the sky or watch his steps all the day long to keep him safe from the snakes and the knives and the glass and the loose stones on the wall that would let him fall with a broken neck. Ah, but if God had other plans for him, why the boy could wrap his car around every tree on this drive and walk off without a scratch. That reminds me about my older sister, Mary, down in Norwalk and her youngest boy, Lonnie. She was always worrying—"

"That's all very well to say, Frank," Ben interrupted sharply, "but you're a father, and you know better than that. Would you give Roy one of those infernal machines just because he wanted it? If the money didn't matter, I mean."

Frank frowned, drawing his pale eyebrows down and puckering his big soft mouth in concentration. "I think I would, Mr. Stroud," he nodded his head vigorously. "I think I'd get it for him if Roy wanted it enough. But even if the money didn't matter, I'd make him do some work to earn part of it so he'd have more of a feeling that it was his."

"In the name of Jupiter, man, wouldn't you think of the rest of us? Wouldn't you realize that there are others in the world besides a noisy boy?" Ben yelled, feeling his pulse rise and the beads of sweat on his forehead so he had to mop at it and at his cheeks several times, although it was a cool September day.

"I thought of all that, sir, but a noisy boy is part of the world, too, as you might say, and he has a lot to learn. It may be hard for us older ones to watch and listen while he's doing the learning, but it's twice as hard for him that's going through it. This is an age for machines like that car, and it does a boy like Roy or any boy a lot of good to get the feel of machines in his blood while he's young. The future's going to be his, and he'll need every bit of help that I can give or you can give or anyone else—"

"By Heaven, that's what I mean," Ben bellowed, "that's exactly

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what I mean. The future's going to be his, Harold's and Roy's and Jackie's. Why the devil can't they wait. The present is mine, and I've fought for it. I fought all my life for peace and quiet and waited a long time for it. By Heaven, it's mine now, and I intend to keep it. I hate that red car. If Jackie's father weren't my oldest friend around here I'd speak to him about it in no uncertain terms. The whole neighborhood is upset. If anyone speaks to Chris it should be me, and maybe I will. He should lay down some rules to keep that boy in check. Those boys can wait. All those youngsters can just stand by and wait a while and leave me and the rest of us a few years of peace and quiet before they push us out of the way."

Ben mopped at his forehead and along his cheeks, although it was a cool lovely day, one of those rare days, he realized, as he looked out the open window across the neatly clipped lawn, one of those rarest of days that is so rare that it only comes once a year and then only in the last half of September so that he woke in the morning of that day knowing at once by the very bite and smell of the air and by the quality and clarity of the lemon colored sunlight that the world around him had been released at last from the long thrall of summer. And now again, as he saw the lemon light strike down through the magnificent elms and bathe the meadows and faraway fields where the corn stalks stood already gathered in bundled shocks pointing to the clean swept sky and as he heard the thrilling songs of birds that had summered in Canada and were now headed south, he remembered this rare gem of a day last year and ten years ago and every important year of his life, each time marking a period in his mind like the end of suffering and suffocation, like that morning in Naples at the end of his long summer honeymoon trip with Jean through India and Africa when the boat had come across from Egypt and into Naples in the night so that he woke in the early light of the day feeling and smelling the sharp bite of the air and seeing the round spot of fresh blue sky through the porthole above him as he lay in his bunk knowing he was home again, home in the north, home away from the tropics and the heat, home in the cool north even in a foreign land thousands of miles from New England, but home even there in Naples because of the day and the air. Jean had died in September when Warren was only two, leaving him to bring

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up his only son. And when Warren was grown and was married to Ellen it had been in September; and in September again when Ellen had died giving birth to Harold. For him September was a month of birth and marriage and death, he reflected, as these familiar memories went through his head in less time than it took him to turn his eyes from the window of the limousine to the opposite door that was being wrenched open.

"Hands up or you're dead."

Frank put his hands up quickly in mock fright as Ben looked at the two boys holding pointed sticks raised like javelins. One of the boys had disordered ginger hair like Frank's and the other had blond sandy hair the way Ben's had been before it turned white. He noticed again that Harold was at least half a head taller than Roy, although they were both the same age; or Roy was actually a little older, as a matter of fact, since his tenth birthday had come earlier in the summer while Harold's wouldn't be until next week. Harold was also the handsomer boy of the two; there was no doubt about that, except for his ears which stuck out like butterfly wings.

"Hands up, Gran," Harold ordered, "we're jaggerin you."

He made several jabbing motions with the stick which Ben could see was nothing but an old broom handle with a wicked pointed end. The wood had been turned or sanded to a needle point and a steel nail driven in the end and cut off.

"What's that you're doing to me?" Ben asked peevishly. "And what in thunder is that murderous weapon, boy? Where did you get it?"

"It's my jagger stick, Gran, my best one. It's very good and sharp for jaggin. I made it myself. Roy and me make 'em in his Dad's shop in the garage."

"Do you indeed," Ben said petulantly. "And what's that thing you do with them?"

"We jag things. I'll show you. This is very good and sharp for jaggin."

"I'm sure it is," Ben said acidly. "And now you ought to jag yourself right up to the house and get some clean clothes and wash up. You look like you spent the morning on a coal pile. How on earth do you get so dirty with these games, boy?"

"They're not games," Harold protested in his piping voice. "Games are for babies. What we do, Roy an me, is real jaggin."

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"Stop using that silly word," Ben said impatiently. "You know it doesn't mean a blessed thing."

"Yes it does, Gran. Roy an me know about it. It's what bootleggers do to get somethin from each other like when one bootlegger wants somethin that the other bootlegger won't give him he hijaggers it from him. We were playin it with Jackie only he got mad cause we hijaggered his car, and I drove it around back of the garage, an he was so mad he was goin to throw stones at us only he didn't cause it would of scratched the paint on his new car."

"You did what?" Ben spluttered. "Did you say that you drove that infernal machine? Where the devil did you—how in thunder did you learn to drive it?"

"Jackie showed me the other day for a trade for the penknife."

"Penknife? What penknife? You know you're not allowed to have a penknife."

"It's not *mine*, Gran. Please *listen* to me instead of intraruptin me. It's *Roy's* penknife that his Dad gave him for his birthday. It's not mine. Roy traded it to me so I'll let him ride in my car when I get it an I traded it to Jackie to teach me how to drive his car so I'll know what to do when I get my car."

For a moment Ben felt a stirring inside of all the old dreams and certainties. Somehow he had forgotten that they started this young in life, and the discovery annoyed him so unreasonably that he felt he had to set the boy straight at once before matters went any further. "You're not getting a car," he said. "You're not getting a car, do you hear me. Let's have that understood. Let's get that through your thick head once and for all. No car. And you're forbidden to ride in Jackie's car from now on. That's a rule; no riding in Jackie's car. Is that clear?"

Harold looked baffled and stricken. "Yes, Gran," he said, letting the hand with the jagger stick fall to his side.

Ben mopped his cheeks again and stuffed the soggy handkerchief back into his pocket. "All right, Prince Hal," he said, "it's not as bad as all that. You and Roy climb in and we'll take you up to the house for lunch."

But Harold stood unmoving with his smudged cheek against the edge of the door and his eyes cast down studying a scab on his elbow as he picked at it tentatively around the edges.

"Come on, boy, don't sulk."

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"I'm not sulkin," Harold looked up with a fierce glare in his blue green eyes. "It's just that I don't—well, you're just no fun, Gran. You're no fun at all. You just spoil all the fun. We were jaggerin you, an then you made all this fuss, an it isn't any fun any more."

"Stop being a spoiled baby and get in the car, both of you."

Roy opened the front door and climbed in next to his father, and Harold began to follow him into the front seat but stopped when Ben called out; "In here, boy; get in back. This is where you belong."

"I wanta sit with Roy in front."

"Did you hear me, boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"In here, please, at once. No nonsense."

"Why? I don't see why."

"Because I say so. That's enough reason why."

"I wanta sit with Roy."

"I don't care what you want. Get in here at once." Ben spanked his palms together hard with a noise like the crack of a pistol, and then he reached for his soggy handkerchief again as he saw Harold turn towards the back seat and heard him slam the front door and then slam the back door after he was inside.

"It's darn mean," Harold muttered. "You always have to get the better of me in everythin."

"What? Speak up, boy. How can I hear you when you mumble that way?"

"It's not important, Gran."

"Then keep your mouth shut. You're wasting my time." He picked up the speaking tube and said into it; "All right, Frank, let's go."

As the heavy limousine got under way slowly and smoothly on the gravel, Ben heard a falsetto whisper and saw the freckled moon face, a smaller edition of Frank, leaning over the back of the front seat and looking fixedly at Harold as if the whispered words would follow the intent gaze straight to Harold's ears and would not be heard by his grown up ears at all.

"The mail," Roy whispered. "They must of stopped in Southport. They got the mail." Roy made exaggerated grimaces with his mouth and pumped his right hand up and down rapidly with

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a finger pointing down at the front seat. "They got it here," he whispered.

Harold's stony face broke into an expression of joy and anticipation. "Is the letter there?" he whispered and moved forward until he perched on the edge of the seat. "Take a look," he said hopefully.

"What letter?" Ben growled and saw them turn their shocked young faces to him with their mouths half open as he went on, "What letter? Who would be writing you letters?"

"Nobody, Gran. It's nothin."

"Is it Warren?—your father, I mean? Do you expect to hear from him? Did you write him, Harold?"

"No, Gran. I promised you I wouldn't."

"Humph—let me see the mail, Roy. I was napping when we stopped at the post office."

Roy and Harold exchanged a quick glance before Roy leaned over and handed him the stack of mail. He leafed through the letters rapidly, noting that they were mostly addressed to him except a few for the different servants and an odd shaped envelope larger than legal size and addressed to Harold. He handed it to him.

"Is that what you're expecting?"

Harold nodded and tucked the fat envelope under the jagger stick between his thigh and the upholstery on his far side.

"What's it about?" Ben demanded, mopping at his cheeks and the back of his neck. "Open it up, Hal."

Harold stared straight ahead at Roy without moving a muscle. Roy dropped his eyes and turned around, withdrawing out of sight except for his thatch of ginger hair sticking up above the seat.

"Don't be stubborn, boy. Open it up."

Ben saw his grandson's lips tremble and the tears start brimming from the lower lids of his eyes and roll down his soiled cheeks and drop into space. He took the letter and threw it on the seat between them.

"There," he said, quavering, "you'll get it away from me, anyway."

Ben mopped his forehead and his cheeks as he stared indignantly at the letter and then at Harold.

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"I wouldn't open a letter addressed to you," he thundered. "Don't insult me. Do you know what's in it?"

"Yes."

"Tell me at once. Stop all this nonsense."

Harold sucked in his breath and wiped his wet cheeks quickly on the shoulders of his jersey.

"It's nothin but a contest, Gran," he said. "Roy an me saw it in one of his Dad's magazines," he went on more easily and evenly. "You get these points for things an whoever gets the most points wins the special grand prize of ten thousand dollars an the second most points wins five thousand dollars. There's lots of other prizes, so Roy an me thought we could win one of them."

"Roy and I."

"What?"

"Roy and I, damn it."

"Oh, yes, Roy an I."

"How do you get the points?"

"There's lots of ways," Harold's face lighted up with enthusiasm. "You get five hunderd points for neatness an another five hunderd points for prompness, an you get a hunderd points for each thing you sell. They send you perfume an seeds an religious pictures an you're supposed—"

"Perfume and seeds and religious pictures," Ben roared. "Where the devil are you going to sell trash like that?—perfume and seeds and religious pictures—what poppycock."

Harold looked at him in surprise. "That's easy, Gran. Everyone's goin to help us. Roy's Dad will help with the religious pictures through the Father at the Church an his friends at the Catholic Mens Club in Southport. Marie says she and the other ladies in her French Club will help with the perfume. Tony says he'll buy the seeds for our garden, an he knows all the other gardeners around here for Jackie Faith's father an people like that, an he's goin to tell them to buy their seeds from me. Roy an me have it all planned so we oughta get lots and lots of points."

"You ought to get a thrashing for victimizing the servants," Ben exploded. "I won't stand for such nonsense in my own house. I won't stand for your coercing them into buying all that trash from you."

"I don't know what that word means, Gran."

"Coercing? It means forcing them to buy it."

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"But I'm not. Everybody's glad to help me. They come an ask me if they can help. They all want me to get the car."

"The what?"

"Oh—"

"What's behind all this, boy? What do you want with the money? Speak up."

Harold bowed his head. "I was goin to buy a car like Jackie's. You said it cost too much money. I thought I could win some money an then—"

"Is that all I said, you nincompoop! Don't you listen to even half the words I say?" Ben mopped furiously at his cheeks. "What else did I say the last time we had this out?"

Harold looked stricken. "I don't know, Gran, I can't remember. You only said it cost too much."

"Damn it, boy," Ben roared. "I said it was dangerous too. You're not old enough. You'll kill yourself on some damn fool tree. Do you remember that?"

"Yes, Gran." Harold squirmed on the seat.

"Well, I forbid it absolutely. No car. You're not to drive a car or even think about driving one or getting one. That's a rule. No car. Put it out of your head for good and all. Is that clear?"

"Yes, Gran." He was bouncing up and down on the seat.

Ben stuffed the hopelessly sodden handkerchief back into his pocket, leaning forward a moment to catch a glimpse, interrupted by the great elms, of his house ahead looking like a giant wedding cake with all its porches spread around it.

"Now, son," said Ben, "we ought to have a sensible talk about plans for your birthday party."

"Tell Frank to stop the car, Gran. I have to get out." Harold's sharp nose looked pinched and white. "I have to wee."

"Hold on till we get to the house, Hal. I want to talk to you."

"I can't."

"Nonsense. A boy of your age. Stop wriggling all over."

"I can't. I have to go now."

"Fiddlesticks."

"I'll just have to wee in my pants an all over the seat," he wailed.

"Oh, damn." Ben leaned forward urgently and touched Frank's shoulder, and the big limousine rolled gently to a stop on the gravel. "Get out," he said. "Hurry up." But his words were

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wasted because Harold was already out, the door slammed behind him, and Roy was out, the door slammed behind him, and both of them were running across the lawn towards the wall of laurel bushes, carrying their jagger sticks raised like spears and hurling them into the trees as they dove through the bushes like swimmers breasting an ocean wave and disappeared into the woods.

"They're gone," said Frank. "God bless them. They'll take the short cut by the old quarry and come up by the back of the house."

"No, Frank, I don't agree. They'll be back in a minute when Harold's finished his business. The path by the quarry is too dangerous. Harold knows he's forbidden to go that way."

"Yes, sir."

Ben stared at the short sharp ginger hairs on the back of Frank's red neck under the tight edge of his cap. "I suppose you think I'm too severe with the boy," he said.

"That's not for me to say, Mr. Stroud."

"No, it isn't," Ben laughed, "not in so many words anyway. But you'll find a way, Frank. You usually do."

"Yes, sir." Frank turned around in the seat so that his right arm was resting on the top of the seat and his rosy freckled face was leaning on his arm. "I'd like to tell you that story now about my sister's youngest boy, Lonnie. While we're waiting here, as you might say."

"Proceed, Frank, please proceed. You have my fullest attention."

"I know you remember my Da that you knew better than I did in some ways and how he used to say, 'God works in mysterious ways'. It's just as true today, Mr. Stroud; it's the very soul of the truth, sir."

"I remember well, Frank."

"Yes, sir. And the truth of the saying was brought to my mind like a voice from the past when I visited my sister Mary down at Norwalk the other night and found her youngest boy Lonnie home on leave from the Navy. He's been stationed over at Lakehurst with the dridgibles there and had the bad fortune to be on the crew of that one as crashed in the terrible disaster out in Ohio early this month. The Shenandoah was her name, do you remember?"

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"Of course I remember. But what about the boy? How did he escape? It must have been terribly dangerous—I mean, was he hurt very badly?"

"Not a scratch, sir, except for his hands where he was holding the wires. It was a miracle, as you might say, and no doubt about it. My sister Mary says it was the hand of God reached down for him. To hear her talk you'd think you were hearing scripture. ' 'Twas the hand of God', she says, ' 'twas the hand of the angry God reached down and broke the machine of the devil and threw the mighty to the ground, and 'twas the God of mercy in all His love that held my boy and laid him gently down.' "

"You and your sister have a similar view of the power of God," Ben commented wryly. "What does the boy have to say? What happened to him?"

"He doesn't say much, sir, but he did tell us once what it was like, and then he wouldn't speak of it again. He said it was the black storm of them all that caught the dridgible in the night and broke it in half like a dry corn cob being snapped in two. He said he was going along the catwalk between the big gas bags on his way to the control car when he remembered he'd left his watch on his bunk. He said he turned to go back and felt the dridgible lift up under him so steep and so fast that it knocked him down on his knees and almost threw him off the catwalk until he turned and got his legs around it and caught the guy wires and held them with a grip like his hands were frozen tight to them, as you might say. That was when he heard the girders snapping like chicken bones, he says, and he heard the fabric ripping and saw the catwalk twist and tear away not one foot from his eyes so he was looking out into the black storm with half the dridgible behind him that he was holding onto by those wires and riding the catwalk like a bucking horse and the other half of the big thing breaking in two and falling away from him in the dark and the control car with the Commander and all them in it falling free by itself like a stone straight for the ground thousands of feet down so that he lost sight of it in the night and never saw it again but heard the terrible noise when it hit. It was then he says he first felt the cold rain on his shirt and knew he was throwing up all his supper and all he had before supper and even lunch until he had no more to throw up but kept trying to do it anyway,

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throwing up dry, like you might say. We asked him if he had any particular thoughts that he would tell us, but he doesn't remember any except that he thinks he might have been a lot more frightened if it was daytime and he could have seen how far down it was. It didn't seem very long to him, he says, maybe five or ten minutes at the most that he rode the bucking catwalk as the rear half of the dridgible came floating down like a leaf. And then he saw some lights beneath him and pretty soon some trees rushing under him, and then he felt the hard bump and the bucking stop. He heard everything very quiet except the wind and the crying of the men and the rain whipping his shirt as he climbed down from the broken girders and walked across the field to the light in the farmhouse; and it wasn't until he was inside the farmhouse and saw the blood dripping from his fingers that he knew he'd been hurt at all."

Ben had been staring fixedly at Frank's agitated face. "That's an extraordinary story," he said, shaking his head, "almost unbelievable."

"It's true, every word of it, sir. But the most remarkable part to me is what it did to Mary. She's always fussed and fretted over the boy ever since he could walk. She begged him not to go in the service because he was her youngest, and she was afraid of the danger to him where she couldn't watch over him any more. But he was dead set on it, as you might say, and his father said it would make a man out of him, which it certainly has now with this experience behind him. Ah, but the biggest change is in Mary, to my way of thinking. When she first heard the news of the disaster she was prosterated for the whole night in tears for losing Lonnie, but when the report come through that he was saved she took the dust cloth to the rocker and she said, 'This is where I stay.' And there she is, rocking on the porch and saying it over and over again; ' 'Twas the hand of God, 'twas the hand of God.' Mary's always been a religious soul, as you might say, but she never was willing to turn Lonnie over to God until now."

Ben looked down at his blue veined hands and smiled to himself. He could remember the time that Frank had started work with him when the century had only begun. Even then he had learned that Frank was enough of a realist to accept his station in life but also enough of a man to have his own opinions and let them be known.

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"So you think that's the best way, do you, Frank? You think I should sit back on a rocking chair and turn Harold over to God?"

"It's the best way, sir. Look at Lonnie."

Ben shook his head. "It seems like a miracle," he said, "I don't deny it. But look at the Commander and all those in the control car that fell to their death. Even in physical perils God is uncertain. Some are chosen; some are let fall. And Harold's all I have, or will ever have now, from the looks of things. But that's not all, Frank. The physical danger isn't all. There's the much worse peril of cheats and sharpers and confidence men who'll be after Harold's money someday. Look how he already trusts them and their fancy promises with this contest that you and I know is just a confidence game played on children. He must be warned and protected and guarded until he can look out for himself. God can't do that for him."

Frank turned his rosy face away so that he was sitting behind the wheel and looking out the front again. "Even in that my old Da was right when he used to say, 'God helps those as helps themselves.' I'm reminded of the story of my Uncle Danny and the three New York toughs which I'll tell you sometime, sir. But I'm even more reminded, sir, of what happened to that handsome penknife I gave Roy for his birthday."

"Humph," Ben said, looking out the window, knowing he couldn't insult the man by offering to pay him for his birthday present to his son, but secretly feeling proud of the way Harold had handled the older boy. "I'll speak to him severely about it, Frank. I don't approve of that kind of sharp trading for the boy, and I'll make sure he gets the knife back from Jackie."

"He won't get it back, sir, I'm sure of that."

"I think you're wrong, Frank. I'll order him to get it."

"No, sir, it's gone now. Them boys, God bless them, is a law unto themselves. You can order them all you please, but it's gone now, unless you want to break their spirit, which I won't be party to, as you might say."

"Break their spirit?" Ben said gruffly and looked out the window at the motionless trees where the boys had disappeared. "By Jupiter, their spirit needs a little breaking. Let's go, Frank. It appears that you're right. They've gone up by the quarry."

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II

When Ben entered the house across the porch he headed straight for the library, pausing only once in the hall to ask Loomis to bring him a fresh handkerchief and the decanter of brandy.

As he closed the library door with a firm click he looked around him and sighed with the first feeling of relaxation and complete privacy he'd had that day. There was a soothing sense of ease and familiarity in the sun filled room with the well ordered and well known objects that were so very precious to his widower's existence that Loomis himself personally dusted and cleaned them. Loomis was so painstaking in his task that Ben was never able to find a speck of dust even in such unlikely places as the ears of the marble head of his namesake, Benjamin Franklin, or in the folds of the marble toga on the Emperor's shoulder or even in the leaves and buds and curlicues of gold that decorated the frames of the oil paintings hung between the shelves. Loomis always knew when he would be home, and it was a measure of his affection that he never failed to have the small lights above each picture frame turned on so that the paintings glowed with a cheerful welcome when Ben first entered the room at any time of day.

He went to the desk and sat in the chair, gathering the humidor towards him. As he raised the chased silver cover he delicately selected a cigar with great leisure and with a love and enjoyment of every motion of his fingers. He held the cigar one inch under his nostrils, not sniffing it or making any vulgar sound, but sensing and feeling its richness and aroma and the heat of the Cuban sun that had made it and the whole world of ease and gratification that it represented to him.

When this ritual had reached its climax, he sighed and placed the cigar on the green blotter while he reached in his vest pocket for the gold cigar cutter with which he clipped the end of the cigar off like a brown bud, watching the bud as it rolled on the blotter, and then sweeping it from there into the basket. From another vest pocket he drew a small gold box which he flipped open with his thumb nail, taking out one of the blue tipped wooden matches, then closing the top with a snap, and turning the box over as he felt its satiny corners in his fingers. He scratched the blue tip of the match on the serrations on the bottom of the

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box, baring his teeth as he clamped the cigar between them, and then closed his lips on the cigar as he touched the flame to the tip and drew in at the same time, so that for a moment there was no sign that the cigar was lit until he exhaled the first clouds of blue smoke into the quiet sun streaked air.

As he settled back and watched the smoke he thought briefly that he was setting too much store by a mere cigar, but in the two years since his heart had begun missing a beat now and then, and since he had those dizzy spells and the terrible sweating, he had tried to take better care of himself by rationing all his pleasures, and this was the first of the two cigars he now allowed himself each day.

Loomis knocked and came in to lay the silver tray like an offering on the desk and to withdraw without a word. Ben watched him come and go silently, thankful that Loomis asked nothing of him at this moment when he felt the greatest need of privacy.

For he had a decision to make, and he had nowhere to turn except to himself. Frank had already had his say, and so, at various times, had Loomis and Harold's nurse, Marie, and fat Louis, the chef, and Tony, the gardener. These were all the senior members of what he thought of as his family, gathered under his roof, sustaining and soothing him, all surprisingly different like a family and all like a family in their loyalty to him and to an indefinable entity that was called "Fairlawn", where they had chosen to live, putting down their roots for good, placing themselves in his care.

And now his grandson, a nearly ten year old sprite of a boy, had stirred their sympathies over an utterly foolish question and had created a subtle division in his family so that, while none of them would openly oppose him, none of them were entirely with him any more.

But he had the final decision to make, whether it was about the red car or anything else that concerned all of them. And the decision had to be made now, and it had to be a clear one. Harold was growing quickly out of boyhood and would soon be a young man. Ben remembered how Marie had said last year after a fight with Harold: "Truly he doesn't want a single thing to stop him in his life, all his life. He is most *most* stubborn." That was the problem in a nutshell right there. Whether to prune and clip and

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trim the boy to hold him down and hold him close or whether to let him grow in any tangled way and run the risk of his becoming thorny and wild and impossible to have around, as Warren had become before he left.

It was not an easy decision.

As he looked up from the cigar smoke at the portrait that had been painted before the war he wondered whether it would have been any easier ten years ago. Certainly he had not changed much in outward appearance from the Ben Stroud who had posed for the portrait, a big man with a big frame and bushy hair and eyebrows that had not altered in their fierceness in those ten years but only in their color, being pure white now. His aquiline nose was just as sharp today, and his face just as pink and round and unlined with age. In fact, the only noticeable physical change was the small protruding stomach that shamed him whenever he had to send his clothes to be let out again. No, the biggest alteration had not been on the outside but on the inside, a corroding away of his confidence and spirit, so that for the last two years he who had never been sick had been in mortal fear of his heart and of death and final oblivion, and had fastened on Harold with a frenzy as his only hope of survival, his only contact with the ages after he was gone.

Ben poured himself some brandy and finished it off in one swallow and poured himself another glass, his second and his final ration for the day. He held the stem between his thumb and his forefinger, moving the crystal goblet slowly across the blotter like the Queen on a chess board, seeing with pleasure the lovely liquid patterns of moving sunlight that it made on the surface of the blotter.

Suddenly he rose, glass in hand, and walked across the quiet room, intent, but not knowing what he was doing, walking jerkily, almost without thinking or with just beginning to think "What am I doing?" as he stopped in front of the garlanded marble head of the Emperor; and then he knew, standing there, that he had come for help, as he had once or twice before in his life.

"Ave Antoninus!" he said.

The sightless eyes stared back at him. He took a sip from the crystal goblet and then, as if at the communion rail, held the

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goblet to the Emperor's patrician lips in turn, tilting the goblet until some of the brandy ran down and stained the marble chin.

"Ave Aurelius!" he sighed, like a benediction.

He felt for a moment transported into the noble world of the Antonines in the time when the Pax Romana reached over all the shores of the Mediterranean, a sunny time of peace unlike any that the world has known since, a time when elders were respected and household gods were respected and life had an easy well defined pattern.

He reached to the shelf of the bookcase behind the marble head and picked out the book that was bound in calfskin dyed imperial purple. He opened it to the first page, as familiar as the prayer book.

"*MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS, THE EMPEROR, TO HIMSELF*"

"1. *FROM MY GRANDFATHER VERUS*, a kindly disposition and sweetness of temper.

2. *FROM WHAT I HEARD OF MY FATHER AND MY MEMORY OF HIM*, modesty and manliness.

3. *FROM MY MOTHER*, respect for the gods, and generosity; and abstention not only from doing ill but even from the very thought of doing it; and furthermore to live the simple life, far removed from the habits of the rich."

There he stopped and looked up at the sightless eyes and whispered, "Ave", for who could read even these few simple words without looking deep inside himself and finding that he fell far short of their measure. He read the words again, moving his lips slowly. Generosity was there, and a kindly disposition, and sweetness of temper. Also the gods were there with a thousand names glimmering beyond the printed page, a multitude of Roman gods each named with a Roman name so that one god protected the shining breastplates of all the legions on guard in foreign lands while another breathed life into the cooking fires in the dwelling places of Rome. There was a god for every household, for every market, for every river and harbor and tree. There was a god for every profession, for every trade, for every wonder that man could see. And then, like a clap of thunder, Ben saw a vision of clouds fading back from the beginning of time to reveal a host

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of gods for all races and tribes and natures of men, gods of beauty and hate and fear and love, gods of birth and growth and travel and death, gods enough for all men everywhere at all times so that each man everywhere could have his own god to watch over him. And Ben closed his eyes to see the vision better. And he saw that there was nothing outside of him, but that all was inside. And he rested, knowing what he would do now. He would be kind; he would have a sweet temper; he would be generous but not indulgent; he would be such a perfect grandfather and father to the boy that when he was gone Harold would remember him with the fondest—

Crash, the library door flew open.

"Gran, I have it, I have—"

Ben turned away from the marble sightless eyes.

"Hush, child, hush," he said. "Please learn to knock on doors."

"But I have it," the boy gasped, and then Ben saw that he still carried the jagger stick in one hand and now held a blue paper in the other.

"Quiet down, Hal," he said, absorbed in his vision. "You're acting like a wild Indian. Quiet down now. I have something to tell you that I think you'll like. I think you'll be glad to hear that I've reconsidered the whole question of your birthday, and that I now believe that your tenth birthday warrants a special present."

"I have it here, Gran, if you'll—"

The boy waved his hand with the blue paper as Ben looked down on him benignly. "Please try not to interrupt me, Prince Hal. I want to tell you about the present for your birthday. It's the most wonderful thing a boy could have, something I always longed for—"

"I don't—"

"Please, Hal, please," Ben pleaded.

"All right, Gran. You go ahead." The boy dropped his arms to his side.

"When I was your age I—well, I won't bother you with that. But there aren't many big events in anyone's life, and going from the single into the double numbers is certainly one of them. When my father Amos could have changed my whole—well, this is what I'm thinking of, Hal. Would you like a Shetland pony and a real wicker cart?"

"No."

"Oh, think what you're saying, boy. It's a very exiting thing

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to have a pony with a life that is all your own and the proper rig to go with it."

"No, Gran."

"What's the matter, boy? Don't you like animals?"

"No."

"Stop picking your nose," Ben ordered. "Can't you say anything else but no?"

There was a moment of silence. "I'm not pickin my nose," said Harold.

"You were."

"I'm not now, Gran."

"All right, you aren't now."

Ben walked to the desk and put the empty goblet on the tray, snatching the fresh handkerchief away as he sat down.

"Let's start over again, Harold," he said, blinking his eyes. "I don't believe you understood me. I'm opposed to your having a car because of the cost and the danger involved. That's my final decision, as you well know, and there'll be no change in it. On the other hand, I realize that your tenth birthday is a special event, and I think you should have a special present regardless of cost, something you'll remember all your life. Now, I want to leave the choice entirely up to you in this matter, but I would like to suggest that a pony and a pony cart can be a source of a great deal of pleasure. Ponies are very intelligent animals and also very safe, and they're lots of fun to learn to take care of. A pony is like a pet. You'll grow to be good friends with him, and that will be a wonderful experience for you. You can give him a name, and he'll get to know you as his master."

"Jackie calls his car Blitzen. I heard him when he's startin it. 'Come on, good old Blitzen', he says."

Ben sighed with a mild feeling of exasperation. "Yes, I wouldn't be surprised at anything from that quarter," he said acidly as he picked up the handkerchief and began to pat his forehead. "Jackie's what is called a late child. His mother's over forty, and his father's nearly my age. When you add to that the fact that he's an only child you can understand that he might be queer about some things. But no normal boy would act that way. No normal boy would give a name to a machine."

"I'm going to name my car Stinger. That's a better name than Blitzen. Blitzen is a sort of baby name from a baby story."

Ben mopped along his cheeks and down his neck. "Now,

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Harold," he said, raising his voice and feeling that the Pax Romana was slipping forever away from him, "for the hundredth and last time. You are not getting a car. Be a good child and put that thought out of your mind."

"Yes, I am, Gran." He held up the hand with the blue paper. "I have it here an—"

"You're not, absolutely not."

"Yes, Gran. I'm goin to buy it myself an if you won't let me I'll run away an buy it anyway an live with Jackie until Dad comes home."

"Buy it," Ben roared. "How in thunder are *you* going to buy it? With what? With those seeds and perfume and religious pictures, I suppose? You're talking utter rot, boy."

"If you'll let me tell you—I been tryin to tell you all along." He held up the blue paper again. "Look, I got five *hunderd* dollars from Dad for my birthday."

Ben ran the sopping handkerchief across his forehead. "You lie. You're lying to me. Let me see it. How did you get it? Where did it come from?"

"Frank saved it out of the mail for me, a letter from Dad."

"Frank, eh? By Heaven, I'll—let me see it. I don't believe you."

"Here it is, Gran. Five hunderd dollars it says. Look. An my name. Pay to the order of Harold Stroud. It's for me. It's mine."

Ben put down the wet handkerchief and held the blue paper stretched between his hands. He felt dizzy so that he could hardly focus his eyes on it. Finally he managed to do so and saw that it was an international money order drawn on Barclay's Bank at Nice, A.M., France on September 5, 1925, more than two weeks ago. Ben had no doubt that it was negotiable. He folded it neatly and tucked it in his vest.

"Give it back to me," screamed Harold, shocked. "It's mine. You can't have it. It's my money."

"It's gambling money," Ben roared. "It's dirty filthy gambling money your father won at the casino. It doesn't belong to you or to him or to anyone else. I'll give it to charity. It doesn't belong to you."

"It does, it does." Harold's sharp nose was pinched and white. "It's my money. It has my name on it. I'll tell Frank to tell

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Judge Bond on you. You're a thief. You stole it from me. Judge Bond'll put you in jail. You'll see, you'll see, if you don't give it back to me." The tears were dripping from his cheeks.

"Damn it," Ben shouted, "Judge Bond appointed me your guardian a year ago when your father left. How can I steal from myself? You can't own anything until you're twenty-one. Get hold of yourself, boy." Ben's head was throbbing, and he could feel the drops of sweat running down his cheeks and neck and wilting his starched collar.

"I don't care," Harold shrieked, "it's mine. Give it back to me. It's mine. Give it to me." His ears trembled like butterfly wings as he raised the jagger stick like a javelin. "I'll jag you. I'll jag you good. I'll jag you dead."

"What?" Ben rose from the chair in wrath. "What?" he bellowed. "Are you threatening me?"

"I'll jag you, I will," Harold sobbed. "I'll jag you dead," he wailed.

Ben started around the corner of the desk towards the boy when his head exploded, and it was like Frank said as he heard the girders snapping like chicken bones and the fabric ripping and felt himself knocked down on the catwalk and looking out into the black storm all around so that he was like a dry corn cob snapped in two and falling into the black storm, falling free like a stone straight for the ground, losing all sight of himself as he fell in the night and fell and fell and fell. And then there was nothing.

After a very long time there were large blue bubbles.

And then, much later, there were orange bubbles and then blood red bubbles floating upwards in a tawny liquid like honey that seemed to be lighted from within.

Sometime later he heard the bubbles making a terrible roar like the thunder of a waterfall.

Several hours passed by and then through the pouring cataract of water he heard a distant piping voice calling to him.

"Gran, Gran, Gran," it called. And as it grew louder it sobbed, "Come back to me, Gran. Don't leave me alone."

Ben opened his eyes and found that he was looking up at the ceiling and feeling that a wide space of years had passed. He was surprised to see Warren leaning over him with tears falling from

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his boyish cheeks. He wondered how this could be. Certainly Warren was grown now. And yet this boy with the ears sticking out was just like—and then he remembered it all.

"Gran," Harold quavered, "are you all right? I didn't do it. I didn't jag you. Honest I didn't. Are you all right?"

Ben stared up at the boy. It was surprisingly peaceful lying on his back on the rug. In a minute or so he would try to speak to him and would try to move. But just for now it was wonderfully peaceful lying there not involved in anything, coasting, gliding, immobilized as if pinned in some wreckage.

"Are you all right, Gran? I didn't jag you. I just lost my temper. I wouldn't have jagged you ever. Honest I wouldn't. You just fell down in a lump, and I didn't know what happened. I was sort of frightened and lonesome."

"Hal," Ben said in a thin weak scream.

"What, Gran? Is anythin wrong? Why don't you get up, Gran?"

Ben did not move. "Get Loomis—Hal—get Loomis."

"Are you sick?"

Ben closed his eyes. He could hear the sharp windy noise of his own breathing as well as the distant slam of a door in the upstairs hall. Was he sick, indeed, he thought. Not sick, he thought, just brushed lightly and warningly by death, just struck down and gasping. Not sick at all, though they would certainly send for that old quack of a doctor to come and examine him and issue orders prohibiting brandy and cigars and rich foods and going to work and everything worthwhile in life, leaving him all alone rocking on his porch like an invalid husbanding his remaining strength for the few weeks or months or years he had left by himself rocking on his porch like Frank's sister Mary. Only she wasn't an invalid; she chose it that way; and her family came to her; and she was never alone as she rocked, saying, " 'Twas the hand of God, 'twas the hand of God," as if she knew better than he did what the Emperor meant when he wrote, "and furthermore to live the simple life, far removed from the habits of the rich." Ben opened his eyes.

"Get Loomis," he said, noticing that his voice was stronger.

"I will, Gran." Harold started away slowly but came back again before he reached the door. "What about my five hunderd dollars, Gran?"

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"It's no time for that. I've had a heart attack, Hal. Get Loomis."

"But it's mine, Gran," he said plaintively.

"Now you're jagging me, Hal. This is no time to be asking me about that. Now you're jagging me," Ben said with reproach. His voice was much stronger.

Harold's green blue eyes stared at him and then down at the scab he was picking at on his elbow.

"I guess you're right, Gran. I guess I *was* jaggin you in a way. I'm sorry. I won't do it again, Gran. Let's forget all about it. Let's forget all about the car an the money an everythin. I won't do it again, Gran."

He turned towards the door with an odd precise stiffness.

Ben rolled his head on the rug to watch him. "Harold," he called, "just a moment."

"Yes?"

"What did you mean—you won't do it again?"

"I won't jag you again, Gran."

"With the stick, you mean? Threatening me, you mean?"

"No, Gran, botherin you about the car and things and not obeyin you an tellin fibs like sayin I had to do wee when I really didn't an—well, just jaggin you to get things from you. That's what I mean."

"I see. Listen, son, have those people sent you any of those things yet—the perfume and seeds and religious pictures?"

"No, Gran. They're waitin for my order."

"Good. Have you and Roy decided how many you can sell?"

"Yes, Gran."

"Very good. Now listen carefully. I want you to make out that order and send it in just as soon as you can, son. And listen, I want you to double it, double the number you decided on, triple it, quadruple it, no, make it tenfold. Order ten times the number. I may spend the rest of my life in a rocking chair, but you and I and the rest of us are going to plaster this county with perfume and seeds and religious pictures. And do you know something else, son? For every dollar's worth you sell I'm going to put five dollars in a box, and when there are enough of them in the box you're going down to buy yourself a car and have its name painted in white on the red door in neat letters one inch high STINGER. That car will be yours because you earned it and not

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because you got some play money that meant nothing to him who sent it and would mean nothing to you if you spent it. Now what do you think of that?"

"I'll never jag you again," the boy kissed him. "You're my real Gran; you're my very best Gran there is. I'll never jag you again, never, never, never; an if you see me even just beginnin to jag you, you say 'No jaggin today, Harold' an I'll know right away an I'll stop." The boy kissed him again.

"It's your nature, son. You'll always be jagging me. I don't think I'll mind that so much now as long as God gives me the wisdom to prevent you from ever getting as close again to actually jagging me with your jagger stick as you were a few minutes ago."

"Yes, Gran." Harold turned away with embarrassment. "I'm going to get Loomis," he said, running.

"Get Frank, too," Ben called after him, "and Louis and Marie and Tony. I'm going to need them all."

As the door was closed carefully and firmly Ben let his head settle back on the rug so his eyes were staring at the ceiling again. He listened to all the noises of the house, the closing doors and the running on the stairs and the hurried voices as his family gathered its strength. While he was listening intently he heard Jackie's car sputtering in the distance, the noise growing rapidly louder so that he knew the car was coming up his drive.

"Damn it," he roared, raising himself up on his elbow, "damn—damn—damn."

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HOWARD NEMEROV

I Only Am Escaped Alone to Tell Thee

I tell you that I see her still
At the dark entrance of the hall.
One gas lamp burning near her shoulder
Shone also from her other side
Where hung the long inaccurate glass
Whose pictures were as troubled water.
An immense shadow had its hand
Between us on the floor, and seemed
To hump the knuckles nervously,
A giant crab readying to walk,
Or a blanket moving in its sleep.

You will remember, with a smile
Instructed by movies to reminisce,
How strict her corsets must have been,
How the huge arrangements of her hair
Would certainly betray the least
Impassionate displacement there.
It was no rig for dallying,
And maybe only marriage could
Derange that queenly scaffolding—
As when a great ship, coming home,
Coasts in the harbor, dropping sail
And loosing all the tackle that had laced
Her in the long lanes. . . .

I know
We need not draw this figure out.
But all that whalebone came from whales,
And all the whales lived in the sea,
In calm beneath the troubled glass,
Until the needle drew their blood.

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I see her standing in the hall,
Where the mirror's lashed to blood and foam,
And the black flukes of agony
Beat at the air till the light blows out.

The Gulls

I know them at their worst, when by the shore
They raise the screaming practice of their peace,
Disputing fish and floating garbage or
Scraps of stale bread thrown by a child. In this,
Even, they flash with senseless beauty more
Than I believed—sweet are their bitter cries,
As their fierce eyes are sweet; in their mere greed
Is grace, as they fall splendidly to feed.

And sometimes I have seen them as they glide
Mysterious upon a morning sea
Ghostly with mist, or when they ride
White water or the shattered winds, while we
Work at a wooden oar and huddle inside
Our shallow hull against the sea-torn spray;
And there they brutally are emblems of
Soul's courage, summoners to a broken love.

Courage is always brutal, for it is
The bitter tooth fastens the soul to God
Unknowing and unwilling, but as a vise
Not to be torn away. In the great crowd,
Because it gathers from such empty skies,
Each eye is arrogant and each voice loud
With angry lust; while alone each bird must be
Dispassionate upon a hollow sea.

White wanderers, sky-bearers from the wide
Rage of the waters! so may your moving wings
Defend you from the kingdom of the tide
Whose sullen sway beneath your journeyings
Wrinkles like death, so may your flying pride
Keep you in danger—bless the song that sings
Of mortal courage; bless it with your form
Compassed in calm amid the cloud-white storm.

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Truth

Around, above my bed, the pitch-dark fly
Buzzed in the darkness till in my mind's eye
His blue sound made the image of my thought
An image that his resonance had brought
Out of a trivial horror of the sun—
A garbage pit, and pile where glittering tin
Cans turned the ragged edges of their eyes
In a mean blindness on mine, where the loud flies
Would blur the summer afternoons out back
Beyond the house. Sleepy, insomniac, black
Remainder of a dream, what house? and when?
Listening now, I knew never again
That winged image as in amber kept
Might come, summoned from darkness where it slept
The common sleep of all such sunken things
By the fly's loud buzzing and his dreaming wings.

I listened in an angry wakefulness;
The fly was bitter. Between dream and guess
About a foundered world, about a wrong
The mind refused, I waited long, long,
And then that humming of the garbage heap
I drew beneath the surface of my sleep
Until I saw the helmet of the king
Of Nineveh, pale gold and glittering
On the king's brow, yet sleeping knew that I
But thought the deepening blue thought of the fly.

Fall Song

Darkly against the winter's white
  The bundled lovers go,
And do, unless indoors at night,
  No more than show
    Delight.

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The first beginning of the spring
  Bids lovers to the lawn;
Chameleonlike against the thing
  That sets them on
    They cling.

Summer, anonymous in green,
  Deceives me least of all;
An undiscriminating screen
  Where lovers sprawl
    Unseen.

The bridled bloodshed of the fall
  Reveals how to my spleen
Discamouflaged the naked crawl
  Where the leaves grow lean
    And fall.

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THOMAS STERLING

Still Waters

SHE BROUGHT A GLASS OF TOMATO JUICE for him and one for herself. The children had mixed their own drinks.

"Well, Daddy, what do they think of it?" she said, gaily.

The architect's drawing was set against the silver bowl on the coffee table. She wondered why Mr. Cartridge had found it necessary to draw the trees before the house in such detail. There was something impossibly pretty about the picture.

"I don't know, Dad," said Dick, ignoring his step-mother, "are you sure it isn't too small? After so long in town—you have so much stuff. . ."

"We don't need any more," she said, giving Daddy's opinion on the matter just as he would give it. "With Jeannie married and Dave in Dayton, what do we need all of this for?" As she spoke of "all of this", she moved her hand in a small circle, indicating the great old house which she loved so much.

"I hope you don't think I'm running out on you, Dad," said Dave, ignoring, as was the family's habit, the fact that the father hardly ever spoke—ignoring the one who *had* spoken.

"Nonsense," she said, with a smile of assurance. "You have your own life to lead."

"When's it going to be finished?" said Jeannie, who had gone over to the bar to pour herself another drink. Her voice was always pitched a note higher when she spoke to her father, like a child's.

"Early November," she said, taking a sip of tomato juice, "about the tenth."

"Except for size, I like it," said Dick.

"So do I," said Jeannie.

Dave just nodded his head.

They're all for it, she thought. After all these years they still disliked her.

Daddy spoke. "I'm afraid it may be inconvenient for Mother. Perhaps the farm is too far out."

"Oh, nonsense, Daddy! Don't be silly. You know I love it at the farm!" The tomato juice left a flat, sour taste. It was not something she liked. She drank it for Daddy's ulcers.

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"But you have so much work here, dear," Daddy said, using his gentle tone, in which she could distinguish a faint edge of sarcasm.

"Oh, what work! I'm sure the Community Chest can get along without me very well. And certainly the Citizen's Union doesn't need me now!" The last, of course, referred to her recent defeat as Board Chairman. "I'm just another Honorary Past President!"

Daddy continued to look worried. She knew that this feeling of his was sincere. He was not a dissembling man, not capable of lying outright. Still, she wondered if he hadn't made his solicitude a kind of luxury. He certainly knew that she would go to any length to convince him that his desires were hers. For years he had urged her to have a drink before dinner. He knew that she was fond of martinis. There was no need to deny herself just because he was sick, he said. But she understood, with a certainty that did not even need experience as proof, that she must maintain her indifference to martinis. And, after all, it was such a small thing. . .

"But look, Monnie," Dick said, "it's only an hour's drive from the farm. You won't have to give up anything." He spoke as if he were arguing against something she had said.

"That's what I told Daddy," she replied. "The roads are excellent all year around and if I do want to go on with *some* of my work I won't have any trouble. Matter of fact," she said, brightly, "I just know I'll feel so well in the country that I'll probably have twice the energy I have now!"

"And then you have your sketching," said Dave.

"Of course! And I'm going to do a lot of that. Do you know, I haven't really worked on my sketching since I left school?" When she referred to school she did not mean her school, she meant *their* school. She always spoke of those miserable, lonely days as if they were the most delightful of her life. Everyone knew that she had once been a school teacher, but from the excited way she talked of that old profession she made them understand that it was something she had chosen to do, not had to do. One of her great failures had been her inability to make the children forget that she had once been their teacher.

She sat forward in her chair as the family continued to discuss the new house. They were all aware that she did not want to move. They took it for granted so completely that she might just

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as well not have wasted her breath to pretend anything else. And yet she knew that she had succeeded at one thing. She had not broken the surface. And that surface, that outward display of accord, was important now. It was her only hope. She knew that her power lay in endurance, not in open dissension.

She had used this power of hers many times before; and never selfishly, but for the good of them all. She had forced Jeannie into the Junior League with it. "Of course, dear," she had said, "it's not important. I don't like this snobbery any more than you do—but they do good work." They do good work. And she had won, not in open battle but by a sort of mental erosion which was her only weapon. During the war Jeannie had been rewarded. A little foresight had meant the difference between being a volunteer receptionist at Mercy Hospital or a mere nurse's aid. Would Dick be married to Mary Lee Peebles now if his own Monnie hadn't quietly arranged it?

And in a larger sense, she had changed the life of the whole family with this one weapon of hers. She had brought them into the community, counteracting that tendency to reticence and reserve she had found in them as the result of the real mother's death. She had spent this last eighteen years of her life pushing them all out into the light: sending the children off to parties they would rather have avoided and forcing her husband to pay calls and receive them with a politeness she knew he did not feel. And this was not selfish. There was a place reserved for them in the world by reason of their common interests with others as well as their physical possessions. To refuse to take this place, to stop their lives at the moment the children's mother had died, was wrong. It had been her job to clean away the memory of that other woman. She had never quite succeeded in this, but at least she had built a new world for the family. She had spread their name—her name now—in the city. It was there on the church roll of Christmas donors, there in newspaper reports of child guidance work, there at the head of P.T.A. projects, there in the announcements of charities and benefits. It was there—where it belonged.

They were grateful in a curious way, grateful to her for taking this burden of sociability off their shoulders. They could always pretend, now, that they wished they weren't invited to the Maskers Ball every year, conscious that she had made it inevitable

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that they would be. Daddy could laugh at her Community Chest work, knowing all the while that other business men would meet him and comment on what a damn swell job his wife was doing. She had made it possible for them to do the very thing she wanted them not to do—to remember fondly that other, beautiful, impractical woman who had not bothered her head about such matters.

But now she asked for something for herself. Daddy had always wanted to move permanently to the country—to the "farm" where the children had been born and which his first wife had loved so much. And each year she had stopped him by reminding him of the children. They needed the social life of the city. She too, she had said, would like nothing more than moving to the farm. She would be so grateful to get away from town. But not yet. Not until the children were settled. And suddenly—before she had time to plan—Dick was married, Jeannie was engaged and Dave wanted to move away. She was caught, now, by her own words. . .

"Really, Daddy, I'm going to love it. I just know I will!"

"I hope so, Mother," he said, allowing his face still to show some doubt, which it was her duty to wipe away.

"Monnie," said Jeannie, who could imitate her father's faint note of sarcasm perfectly, "why can't you donate your farm sketches to the cerebral palsy fund? You could keep up your work that way without having. . ."

Then Daisy called them to dinner and Daddy said it was just like old times, with Dick here again.

Mr. Cartridge, of course, let everyone know that he was doing their house. Within a week practically every woman she knew had called to ask if it was true that she was going to the country permanently. She knew what that meant. She knew that she had lost the customary second term as Board Chairman of the Citizen's Union because the story had leaked out. It wasn't a question of her not being able to make the trip in from the country. That was easy enough; but just the slight possibility that she might have difficulty getting to the meetings gave her opponents the lever they needed. At the Community Chest meeting that week they even came out and asked if she would be able to continue as Assistant Treasurer. She knew that it would be a mistake to say, yes, of course she could, because part of the ritual of these meetings was

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that such positions were an intolerable burden and the women who had them were supposed to say that they only wished they could spend more of their time at home. She had avoided a plain answer by saying that she and her husband were "still pretty much up in the air" about their eventual plans. She would let them know when things were "more definite".

The situation grew desperate. Mr. Cartridge already had estimates for tearing down the old farm house, and once the physical work on the new place actually began she knew her battle was hopeless. When a thing is begun it is almost finished: this was an axiom that had worked for her many times and she recognized its power now, working against her. She was not the kind of person who finds any pleasure in extreme solutions and was therefore all the more shocked when she caught herself thinking—actually thinking—that it might be possible to charge Mr. Cartridge with some crime or to burn the new house down just before it was time to move in. Naturally, she put these ideas quickly from her mind; or at least relegated them to a secret pocket of it where she kept other impossible notions like her sudden awareness, three years ago, of a physical attraction to Gus Thibalt.

No. Extremes were not for her. Her only power lay in perseverance. From her youngest girlhood she had known this. She never had the strength to stand up and fight for herself. Only when the opposition had apparently won a victory was her way open to her. She had always been the smiling loser—the good sport—who fought for a reversed decision after the game had already been decided.

She began to work against the new house as she had never worked on anything. It was, she told Daddy, really selfish of her to think that she could just move off to the country and leave behind all those crippled children, all those cancerous hospital patients, all of the needy. No, it was self-centered. She could not live that way. She wouldn't feel right within herself.

Daddy had countered, as she knew he would, by saying that she could come into town anyway. It wasn't, after all, such a long trip. She admitted it wasn't, but it would double the time she would be away from him. He needed someone to take care of him. But he wasn't retiring yet, he reminded her. No, but he would soon.

Then she began to find flaws in Mr. Cartridge's plans. She took

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Dick's argument. There really wasn't enough space. They needed so much extra storage room because of the children's things as well as their own. Well, Daddy answered, they would throw out all their own junk and the children would just have to take what they wanted and forget the rest. She laughed indulgently at this. That was just like him. He always wanted to throw everything they weren't using at that moment into the dump. Just let him ask for something one day and have her tell him it had been thrown out and see how he would rave! They settled this by agreeing to build an extra storage room.

One day she discovered that the property next to theirs had been bought and reminded him that someone might get it into his head to build a factory there. There was a lot of cheap farm labor around and he knew how the Westwood section, which had been country a few years ago, had grown into a manufacturing center. Daddy got in touch with the man who had bought the land and discovered that it was to be used as a farm for pasturing horses.

She made other objections, all of which Daddy met with a calm, methodical and somehow satirical concern for her happiness. As she became aware that she would almost certainly fail, she realized the cause of her defeat. For the first time she was being really selfish. Once, in eighteen years, she asked for something entirely for herself and she couldn't have it. She had always understood that she had come into this family to do a job and that nothing more was expected of her. Really, she had received a promotion slightly above that of the children's teacher. She had accepted this new position with—and she was fond of the phrase—her "eyes open". There was much to be thankful for and little to complain of, and yet there had always been moments when a very small part of her would insist that one thing—at least one thing—should be entirely hers. She could not help thinking, bitterly, that as long as her arguments involved the children's welfare, Daddy had been content to give in to her. But now, when staying in town was merely something she wanted, he was not concerned.

But all the time, no matter how hotly she pressed her point, she kept the surface smooth. She and Daddy agreed, they always had agreed and they always would. She knew that once she broke the tranquil calm of the upper waters nothing would ever be the same again. She also knew that she would give up her only possible advantage if she did that.

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The night before Dave was to leave for Dayton they had a dinner party for the immediate family. Dick came with Mary Lee and Jeannie brought Dunstan. It was going to be a real old-fashioned party. She knew that Daddy was hoping that Dave's position with the Goodyear people wouldn't amount to anything. "Daddy," she had often said, in a recitation of his virtues, "loves his family." Dunstan was a nice boy and he called Daddy an "old farmer", which pleased him more than anything else could.

"We're really going to envy you," said Jeannie. "We're going to have to stay cooped up in town for a while, until Dunnie makes his first million."

That, she thought, enviously, was exactly the line she would have taken if she weren't in imminent danger of going to the country.

Daddy laughed, proudly.

She got up, knowing that no one would notice her. She had done this so often before. She passed Dick who was mixing drinks and went into the kitchen. Daisy had already taken the bottle of tomato juice cocktail from the refrigerator and had left it on the pantry table. She poured two old-fashioned glasses full and then, exactly as if she had planned it all along, she emptied one of them into the sink.

"I think coal is better," Dick was saying. "It's cheaper and by God it keeps you warmer. A good coal furnace, Dad, will never give you any trouble."

"*Here* you are, Daddy," she said, handing him his glass.

He seemed to have been warned, because he looked directly at her other hand and saw that it contained nothing.

"Don't you feel well, dear," he said, softly.

"I thought I'd have a martini tonight." She turned away from him and went to the bar.

Dave was speaking. "I can get you the tires through the company, Dick. Don't get cheap stuff. It isn't worth it."

"You'd better get two sets," Dad said, "I'd like to put some on Mother's car. She'll be using it more and the back ones are pretty worn."

She mixed her own martini, using very little vermouth, and went back to her chair. She took a sip almost before she had arranged her skirt over her knees. Daddy looked at her for a moment and then turned to Mary Lee.

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"How's the young idiot treating you?"

"Just fine, Dad," answered Mary Lee, who had melted quickly and without a complaint into this father-loving family.

She took another sip of the harsh, clear liquid and said, "We hope you and Dick will spend a lot of time at the farm. Even though we don't have much room we want you all to consider it home. You and Dunnie have to come too," she said to Jeannie.

That was not nice, she thought. You know his children are important to him. She was beginning to carry on a dialogue with herself. Perhaps she was anticipating the effect of the martini.

The children looked at her more intently. It was not the sight of the drink in her hand which drew their attention, it was simply that the tomato juice was missing. Can I have them both? she nearly said aloud.

"I hear that you may give up your post with the Community Chest," Jeannie said.

She bowed her head over her glass in a way which could have meant yes as easily as it meant no.

Dick said, "Dad, I'm certainly glad you've made up your mind. It'll do you a world of good. They're going to start tearing the old place down next week, aren't they?"

Daddy nodded, and she could see the end of everything in that final motion of his head which admitted no opposition. She drank the last of her drink and wiped her lips with her tongue. It is the end. It's all over. Now you go into your retirement, she told herself, without ever, *ever* having anything. The drink was beginning to hit her. It had been so long.

"I'll get you those tires, Monnie," Dave said.

"I don't want to move to the country."

The room quieted and everyone looked at her in a way they hadn't done for a long time — since the first year she had lived here.

"I said I don't want to move to the country."

"But Monnie, you always said you wanted to," said Dick, speaking, she knew, for his father.

"Yes," Jeannie added, "You've always told us you'd like nothing better than . . ."

"Well, I don't!"

Daddy looked hurt. But he did not speak yet. He had his family.

"Monnie," Dave said, with a kind of soft, surprised look on

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his face. "You should have said something before. I mean the plans and everything."

"I know I should, but I didn't. I'd hate to live in the country. I'm saying it now."

Daddy watched her with cold, confused eyes.

"Your work?" said Jeannie.

"Yes. My work. But not as you think. I like my work because I'm good at it. I like it also because it makes me feel important. A sense of importance means a lot to me and I *don't* simply do it out of a kind heart or out of a desire to help other people. I do it because I do it well. And I do it . . .", as she spoke she began to feel herself buckling under the weight of their accusations, ". . . for a lot of other reasons none of you would understand."

And calmly, letting the cold lip of the glass touch her cheek, she considered what she had said. Wrong, she thought. That was wrong. Fool. Idiot. Now get out of it, if you can. I dare you. Crazy fool . . .

She knew what she had to do. Her mind cooly dictated a course of action which could not now be avoided, just as it had done one day when she discovered that the Community Chest had donated money to a badly organized charity: "We cannot get the money back," she had told her fellow directors. "Our only course is to donate still more money and then send our people in there and see that it is set up properly." She could not take her words back now, they had been spent. Her only hope lay in going further.

With a flourish she turned the glass upside down above her mouth and caught the olive. She got up and went to the bar. This would be known as "the night Monnie got drunk". Looking back on it, the family would have the sense that something unreal, something abnormal had happened; and, with a decent orderliness of mind, would place this evening in their private museum of oddities, safe from everyday appraisal. So much, from all their lives, was in that museum already, it would make no difference. Naturally, she would have to give up her fight to stay in town. She had no one to blame but herself.

She turned to the family, holding her drink at the level of her mouth. They were bewildered—and a little angry. She swallowed half of her drink and smiled at them impishly, wrinkling her nose at Daddy. She was very sober.

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CAROL JOHNSON

Apocalypse

Love our Jerusalem was always new
whose age abrades the busy unicorn
my wide greek world the gryphon hastened to
(beloved in the Lamb); rivers are born
(my thames) in the name of vines and harvests and
no loud chronology can touch or bind,
sweet river, whom these waters understand.
O break like prophecy upon the mind
where thyatira and pergamus keep
the startled darkness with melpomene:
wake to the fiction of our pain who weep:
the deathless dragon's poor apostrophe.

It is the gryphon (and the Lamb) who live,
the city (and the river's) genitive.

Figure for Prayer

Our vision is a sleep, a stir, wedding
us to the night our senses hear
beyond their kingdom where a child (soft king)
all wound with light, the fisher of our fear,
meeks us to Him fiercely. Dear Majesty,
lowly among the lowing beasts, a star
to find You out, let such diminish me
that wakes us to the dreams our concepts are.
The night we keep is vulnerable as thought;
our love would perish us with fiery weather,
the far-felicity our faith has caught,
were we not oned (wild charity) together.
For all the praise our minds, by night, could knit
would die by dark unless you kindled it.

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HUGH KENNER

Joyce's "Exiles"

BERTHA: I will tell you if you ask me.
RICHARD: You will tell me. But I will never know. Never in this world.
—*Exiles*, 139

Sometime then, somewhere there, I wrote me hopes and buried the page when I heard Thy voice, ruddery dunner, so loud that none but, and left it to lie till a kissmiss coming. So content me now. Lss.
—*Finnegans Wake*, 624

In "The Dead" Gabriel Conroy yearned for the snows. *Exiles*—an austere ungarnished play—is the epiphany of that pseudo-liberation; its Richard Rowan is a Gabriel Conroy liberated by Ibsen, the Ibsen with whom Joyce had been flirting for a dozen years. Having with *Dubliners* abolished Dedalus—rebellious *superbia*—as a point d'appui for art, Joyce now abolished him as an ethical theory.

Exiles is not an apologia for Richard Rowan; we should be prepared to find him suspended in a void, and that is exactly what we do find. Hence the bewilderment of readers who, traversing the canon chronologically, come to him fresh from the soaring close of the *Portrait* instead of from the final pages of *Dubliners*. Though it belongs to the first cycle, the play was written after the start of the second; for reasons that will become apparent, Joyce could not attempt it till he had completed the *Portrait*, and had to finish it before he could get on with the already-drafted *Ulysses*. Stephen Dedalus is as much envacuumed as Richard, but sufficient eloquence of Byronic revolt surrounds Stephen to make this fact easy to overlook. Contemplation of Richard Rowan's unequivocally joyless arrogance makes Stephen-worshippers feel they've been had.

Exiles frees Joyce from Ibsen the undernourished doctrinaire, whose "wayward, boyish" pseudo-rigours of revolt had for some years compromised a portion of his spirit. The repudiation of the Norwegian's Utopia-at-the-other-side-of-free-love is explicit.

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This must be clearly grasped, because the impossibility of squaring the play's emotional quality with what Shavian Ibsenism may lead us to imagine is its "message" has probably stymied more readers than any other difficulty. We had better turn at once to one of the epiphanic moments. Robert Hand ("with growing excitement") proposes to Richard, with the favours of Bertha as prize, "a battle of both our souls, different as they are, against all that is false in them and in the world":

> All life is a conquest, the victory of human passion over the commandments of cowardice. Will you, Richard? Have you the courage? Even if it shatters to atoms the friendship between us, even if it breaks up for ever the last illusion in your own life? There was an eternity before we were born: another will come after we are dead. The blinding instant of passion alone—passion, free, unashamed, irresistible—that is the only gate by which we can escape from the misery of what slaves call life. Is not this the language of your own youth that I heard so often from you in this very place where we are sitting now? Have you changed?
>
> RICHARD: (*Passes his hand across his brow.*) Yes. It is the language of my youth.

"It is the language of their youth," comments Mr. Francis Fergusson, "and it sounds like the Nietzsche of *The Birth of Tragedy*, or the Wagner of *Tristan*." And, Mr. Raymond Williams adds, it is also the language of Ibsen. It is the language, furthermore, of the *Transition*-sponsored official image of Joyce, and of the Transitionists' intercorruption of art and life. It translates the inherent recklessness of aesthetic juxtaposition and manœuvre into a *modus vivendi*. "The intense instant of imagination, when the mind, Shelley says, is a fading coal" is corrupted by Robert into "the blinding instant of passion . . . by which we can escape from the misery of what slaves call life." This is not to weigh the way of the Heathcliffs against the cautious prudential arrangements of the Lintons. Joyce always weighs the parody against the parody. Robert is a Linton posturing as a Heathcliff. *Exiles* explores a counterposition of modes of insincerity. It weighs against the "scrupulous meanness" of "chairs, upholstered in faded green plush" and "Death of the Very Reverend Canon Mulhall" nothing more radically antithetical than the Liebestod of Robert Hand:

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ROBERT: (*Presses her to him.*) To end it all—death. To fall from a great high cliff, down, right down into the sea.
BERTHA: Please, Robert . . .
ROBERT: Listening to music and in the arms of the woman I love—the sea, music and death.

We must not be misled by the plausibility of the speech and costume into supposing that this is any less "faded green plush" than the armchairs of the Merrion drawing-room.

Ibsen imagined talk like Robert's to be an absolute and a defiance of the drawing-room. Joyce exhibits them as continuous modes. When Robert proclaims the eternal law of passion:

ROBERT: (*Still more warmly.*) I am sure that no law made by man is sacred before the impulse of passion. (*Almost fiercely*) Who made us for one only? It is a crime against our own being if we are so. There is no law before impulse. Laws are for slaves.

—he both echoes Ibsen:

. . . set up voluntary choice and spiritual kinship as the only determining factors for union—that is the beginning of a freedom that is worth something. . . . Who can guarantee that two and two are not five on Jupiter?

—and fulfills the mode in which he is exhibited at the beginning of the second act, ejecting sprays of perfume into the summer-house from a pump which he keeps behind the piano: a context for his passion, one would have thought, sufficiently ludicrous to prevent anyone supposing that he is voicing the "doctrine" of the play. Mr. Williams acutely remarks that "when quotations are sought by commentators intent on illustrating from this play the ideas which they assume to be the persistent attitude of Joyce, it is from Robert only that they can be found." And Robert is not an univocal antithesis for Richard; Robert as we shall see is in many respects simply Richard hauled down into visibility.

*

"It is the language of my youth," acknowledges Richard wearily of Robert's mauve bravado. It was also the principle of action of his youth, and it betrayed him.

This fact cannot be pinned down too securely. The paradigms of Richard's conduct nine years before—the shunning of his

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mother, the hegira with Bertha—are those of Ibsen. He had transformed, naively, Ibsen's diagnosis of social dishonesty into a principle of action, exactly as did the impossible Norwegian himself, and as Joyce did in 1904. Richard versus his mother:

> She drove me away. On account of her I lived years in exile and poverty too, or near it. I never accepted the doles she sent me through the bank. I waited, too, not for her death but for some understanding of me, her own son, her own flesh and blood; that never came.

Ibsen versus his family:

> Do you know that I have separated myself for life from my parents—from all my kin—because I could not continue in a relation of incomplete understanding?

Ibsen confused the impercipient inertia of much human conduct with the matrix of convention and artifice in which social and familial relationships are necessarily enacted. His irascible catchwords, "ruthless honesty", "giving oneself wholly and freely", have paralysed most readers as they paralyse Robert Hand; but they conceal *superbia,* not angelic rectitude.

Ethical freedom which shall not be anarchy and utter honesty which shall not be corrosive are proper, it is not merely wry to remark, to a society of angels. Angels strictly speaking: unfallen beings of perfect rationality, in whose society there is no marrying nor giving in marriage. The Exiles to whom this perfection is impossible are exiled from Eden: that is the ultimate meaning of the play.

The determination to behave in this angelic way leads fallen man to behave as a fallen angel: the oldest of theological common-places. This is carefully documented in the text. "To hold you by no bonds, even of love, to be united with you in body and soul in utter nakedness—for this I longed." But human kind cannot bear that kind of reality. Here is what actually happened:

> ROBERT: Richard, have you also been quite fair to her? It was her own free choice, you will say. But was she really free to choose? She was a mere girl. She accepted all that you proposed.
>
> RICHARD: (*Smiles.*) That is your way of saying that she proposed what I would not accept.
>
> ROBERT: (*Nods.*) I remember. And she went away with you. But was it of her own free choice? Answer me frankly.

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RICHARD: (*Turns to him calmly.*) I played for her against all that you say or can say; and I won.

That he has raised her to coangelic status is a gratuitous pretence: the imposition of will upon will is as sharp as in the most abstract dealings via a marriage broker. The Ibsenite rebel "emancipates" no one but himself: the "gift" of freedom he claims to confer is as Bertha sees meaningless, as much so as the analogous gift once offered another woman by Lucifer. He cultivates a habitual exasperation with whatever is not reduced to an orbit intelligible to him because imposed by him—again like Lucifer—and he finally deals with an uncooperative milieu by banishing it. Exile is his invariable destiny, as it was for Ibsen. An important function of this play for Joyce was the clarification and purgation of this Dedalian motive among his many motives for leaving Dublin. In explicating the plight of Richard Rowan, *Exiles* becomes Joyce's final abolition of the last shreds of Stephen.

Richard, paradigm of the way the dignity of naked revolt works out in human practice, is after nine years god-like and wretched. He casts off, as he progresses, images of himself, indifferently in human or verbal material. Robert is the creature of his youth, come to terms a little with Dublin, but ethically arrested at the phase in which Richard formed him in 1903. Beatrice he remakes in his book in progress. As for Bertha, Robert acknowledges, "You have made her all that she is."[1]

RICHARD: (*Darkly.*) Or I have killed her.
ROBERT: Killed her?
RICHARD: The virginity of her soul.
ROBERT: (*Impatiently.*) Well lost! What would she be without you?
RICHARD: I tried to give her a new life.
ROBERT: And you have. A new and rich life.
RICHARD: Is it worth what I have taken from her—her girlhood, her laughter, her young beauty, the hopes in her young heart?

In his working notes Joyce glosses "the virginity of her soul".

> The soul like the body may have a virginity. For the woman to yield it or for the man to take it is the act of love. Love (understood as the desire of good for another) is in fact so unnatural a phenomenon that it can scarcely repeat itself, the soul being unable to become virgin again

[1] "I am simply a tool for you," she says herself.

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> and not having energy enough to cast itself out again into the ocean of another's soul. It is the repressed consciousness of this inability and lack of spiritual energy which explains Bertha's mental paralysis.[2]

The definition of love is given ("Hesitatingly") by Richard on page 78:

> ROBERT: But if you love . . . What else is it?
> RICHARD: (*Hesitatingly.*) To wish her well.

Conceived as that and not as a desire to possess her, it is "unnatural" in an exact sense: it transcends appetitive nature. That is the *psychological* basis for the indissolubility of marriage: a psychological orientation corresponding to the metaphysical fact against which the Exiles are dashed.

Richard the ape of God has made Robert; he has made Bertha; and he sets them in a country-house with a garden, his new man and new woman. Unlike the God in Genesis, he imposes no conditions; but she who has united her soul to his in performing the act of love cries out for them:

> You urged me to it. Not because you love me. If you loved me or if you knew what love was you would not have left me. For your own sake you urged me to it.
> RICHARD: I did not make myself. I am what I am.
> BERTHA: To have it always to throw against me. To make me humble before you, as you always did. To be free yourself. . . .

The parody of "I am Who Am" is too close to be accidental. Bertha and Robert, creatures of a rational idealist, are enacting the drama of the generic rational idealist's resentment at the God who set the baited trap in the garden: "To have it always to throw against me. To make me humble before you, as you always did. To be free yourself." The "freedom" Richard continually exhibits himself as conferring on her has similar co-ordinates. He bestows free will on his creatures:

> RICHARD: (*Controlling himself.*) You forget that I have allowed you complete liberty—and allow you it still.
> BERTHA: (*Scornfully.*) Liberty!

and later:

> BERTHA: . . . Am I to go?

[2]Facsimile reproduction in the *James Joyce Yearbook*, Paris, 1949. Joyce's notes are published here for the first time at the end of the new edition of *Exiles*. Viking Press, 1951. $5.00.

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RICHARD: Why do you ask me? Decide yourself.
BERTHA: Do you tell me to go?
RICHARD: No.
BERTHA: Do you forbid me to go?
RICHARD: No.

To the garden she goes; but he, an enlightened man understanding the nugatory significance of outward acts, an imperfect god incapable of knowing the inner springs of his creatures' volition, he knows that he will never know whether or not she has plucked the fruit.

It is in his role of lonely deity that Richard catechizes everyone: both because he must on principle dominate everyone, and because his only hope of palliating "the soul's incurable loneliness" is to bring others to the condition of himself:

RICHARD: (*With some vehemence.*) Then that I expressed in those chapters and letters, and in my character and life as well, something in your soul which you could not—pride or scorn?
BEATRICE: Could not?
RICHARD: (*Leans towards her.*) Could not because you dared not. Is that why?
BEATRICE: (*Bends her head.*) Yes.
RICHARD: On account of others or for want of courage—which?
BEATRICE: (*Softly.*) Courage.
RICHARD: (*Slowly.*) And so you have followed me with pride and scorn also in your heart?
BEATRICE: And loneliness.

He must make a convert. He cannot. The context of civic society once abandoned, each inquisition of the isolated person exposes that same fact: each is alone. "I am living with a stranger," cries Bertha at the height of the last cross-examination; and looking back even on their days in Rome: "I was alone."

It was not Richard of course who abolished the community for Robert and Beatrice, whatever his responsibility toward Bertha. The community Robert serves with diffidence and factitious gusto, arranging luncheons with the vice-chancellor, mobilizing the facile rhetoric of the daily paper, has abolished itself. It provides no context for meaningful living. To that extent it is Irish paralysis that is epiphanized in that chorussed affirmation of loneliness. As the dramatic mode of the first Joyce cycle,

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Exiles is the final epiphany of the material organized epically in *Dubliners*. The dead city tempts the percipient to naked revolt; but the man who abandons the wreckage of the community for an Ibsenite *vidda* above the snow-line comes to a paralysing realization of his nakedness, tortured like Richard by the voices of those who say they love him, telling him to despair.

Thus in *Exiles* the theme of dual vocations and dual femininity rises above the lyric matrix of *Chamber Music* to achieve explicit geometrical statement. The lyric mode, *Chamber Music* or the *Portrait,* is enclosed within a single person of whom the others are projections. In the drama, Richard swamps the other characters, for reasons that are thematic, not traumatic; not because Richard "is" Joyce, but because the other three characters are being carefully exhibited as versions of Richard because creatures of his. They exist in the play to explicate aspects of his mode of being and phases of his plight.

The list of characters, reinforced by alliterating names, maps out the scheme explicity: the men—

> RICHARD ROWAN, a writer.
> ROBERT HAND, a journalist.

Robert, the parody of Richard, is a "Hand", not a mind. As for the women—

> BEATRICE JUSTICE, his cousin, music teacher.
> BERTHA.

Bertha is without status: simply "Bertha". Richard has deprived her not merely of regularized union, but of social meaning: even of a surname. Hence the void in which throughout the play she vibrates. The weight of thematic symbolism rests on Beatrice. Her Christian name and her function as inspiration for Richard's writing point back to Dante; but Dublin, 1912, is a Florence of "scrupulous meanness". This Beatrice is "music teacher". The cardinal virtue contained in her surname is analogously ossified toward Protestant ethical rigidity: what resounds in her ears is not the choir of heaven but "the buzz of the harmonium in her father's parlour. . . .The asthmatic voice of protestantism."

These three explicate three aspects of Richard. Robert's naive Wagnerian cheapness, both contrasted with and continuous with his life of practical affairs ("I must see part of the paper through

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every night. And then my leading articles. We are approaching a difficult moment. And not only here—") is simply the self-consciously dramatistic component of Richard's autarchic idealism. Joyce headed a page of working notes for the play, "Richard: an automystic. Robert: an automobile." The common factor is "auto". Robert's *superbia* is unglamorous: at one time or another during the play he repeats virtually every action of Richard's, and epiphanizes those actions by transferring them to his own kind of emotional material. His epigram about statues echoes Richard's attitude to the vice-chancellor. His evening with the divorced wife of a barrister echoes Richard's betrayal of Bertha. He thinks of the beautiful as the concupiscible ("the qualities which she has in common with [other women]. I mean . . . the commonest") but surrounds his desire with vulgar idealism: a kiss is an act of homage. For Richard a kiss belongs to the practical world, an act of union; above it moves the austere mind, carefully separating, in the mode of Stephen's aesthetic, that which presents the most satisfying relations of the sensible from that which we grossly desire.

Richard's attempt to maintain human relations with his wife at the level of pure apprehension at which he conducts his Dedalian analysis of beauty is as quixotic, and insulting, as Robert's sensuality. Both are idealisms: it is not, despite Robert's attempt to equate promiscuity with "nature", either the natural vs. the cerebral or the common vs. the refined that is really in question. Bertha's attraction on the one hand towards a husband whom she cannot understand and who does not understand her, on the other hand towards a lover the factitiousness of whose genial carnality ("There is no law before impulse. Laws are for slaves. Bertha, say my name!") she cannot but suspect, underlines the dislocation of both the masculine natures in the play. Richard respects the privacy of everything but her mind. No more than Robert's beglamoured vulgarity can Richard's desire to live in austere detachment like a novelist among his characters be called integral humanism.

The Exiles above the spiritual snowline adhere to the Ibsen-Wagner-Nietzsche image of liberated life as a perpetual passion of reiterated giving, a self-conscious angelic unselfishness. To say that they have no sense of the meaning of community, *civitas*, is to say that human nature for them is a flame asserting itself

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against a background of shadows. Habit, order, custom, are "for slaves"; in the same way, Stephen in the *Portrait* rejects a habitual support amid the difficulties of uniting his will, instant by instant, with that of God, for it is only so that he conceives a valid mode of love. That custom is ignoble is the persistent romantic illusion; that it is cheating is the Puritan version. Richard's way of neither swearing nor expecting eternal fealty surrounds himself and Bertha with the constant demands of a moral reality of which human kind cannot bear very much. We have neither angelic wisdom nor angelic supplies of energy; we cannot live for ever on the passionate *qui vive;* to be neither encouraged nor forbidden at every point is the condition not of human liberty but of human paralysis. Richard rapt himself and Bertha out of a community of paralytics, only to immerse himself and Bertha in a paralysis still more naked: hence the dead stop to which *Exiles* grinds. The guidance of a habitual communal order is not an evasion but a human necessity.

It is perhaps because the image of Richard's state is a little too dispiriting—surrounded not even with a rhetoric of despair—that *Exiles* hasn't been revived as an "existentialist" play. Kierkegaard is the ethical ancestor of both Ibsen and Sartre, and Richard is very like a Sartrean hero, refusing to guide his wife very much as Sartre in his famous parable was unable to advise the young man torn between the Resistance Army and his mother's wishes, because the young man's choice must be left free.

"Revolt" of Richard Rowan's kind depends on all universals being equated with the police. As it is exhibited in *Ulysses,* Dublin society in 1904 furnished persuasive grounds for such an equation; the interpenetration of priest and policeman in the "Lestrygonians" episode, like their juxtaposition in *Dubliners,* expresses adequately the context against which Joyce found it imperative to assert the inscrutable subjectivity of moral action.

That is not the same thing, however, as asserting the unreality of natural law. That is where Kierkegaard comes in.

> Kierkegaard's great error, amid all his great intuitions, was to separate and oppose as two heterogeneous worlds the world of *generality,* or universal law, and that of the unique witness (unjustifiable at the bar of human reason) borne by the 'knight of the faith'. Consequently, he had to sacrifice, or at least 'suspend' ethics. In reality these two worlds

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> are in continuity; both form part of the universe of ethics, which itself is divided into typically diversified zones according to the degree of depth of moral life.[3]

The Exile repeats "Kierkegaard's great error"; he talks of "expressing himself", of "obeying the law of his being", as though "the world of generality", just because it doesn't provide adequate support, were meaningless. And abolishing "the world of generality" (Dublin), making, in Maritain's phrase, "the formal element of morality consist in pure liberty alone", the Exile and his creatures enter not the melodramatic universe of Sartre but a joyless suburban limbo:

> In short, by suppressing generality and universal law, you suppress liberty; and what you have left is nothing but that amorphous impulse surging out of the night which is but a false image of liberty.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> RICHARD: (*Controlling himself.*) You forget that I have allowed you complete liberty—and allow you it still.
> BERTHA: (*Scornfully.*) Liberty!

This drama is older than Kierkegaard; it is at least as old as Milton, in whose myth, Mr. Empson remarks:

> The Fall is due to carelessness, letting Reason slip for a moment, not living quite for ever as in the great Taskmaster's eye. Milton uses [the myth] to give every action a nightmare importance, to hold every instant before the searchlight of the conscious will. It is a terrific fancy, the Western temper at its height; the insane disproportion of the act to its effects implies a vast zest for heroic action.[4]

Milton's Adam and Eve were exiled from the purlieu of a God not less dispiritingly self-righteous than the city fathers of Dublin; they go forth united into a free world amid equivocal calm:

> *Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;*
> *The world was all before them, where to choose*
> *Their place of rest. . . .*

"The world was all before them." The nineteenth century is strewn with sequels to *Paradise Lost.* Wordsworth:

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[3]Jacques Maritain, *Existence and the Existent,* 56.
[4]*Some Versions of Pastoral,* 180-181.

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The earth is all before me. With a heart
Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty,
I look about. . . .

So the first page of *The Prelude;* and we know what became of Wordsworth. Dickens: "The world lay all before him": so Pip in sight of London, and we know what became of his Great Expectations, and what father from the antipodes, the underworld, he found. Joyce: "How simple and beautiful was life after all. And life lay all before him": so Stephen after his return to the Church, and we know what became of his pious determination to "unite his will instant by instant with that of God", and what father he took cocoa with in Eccles Street. In *Exiles* the equivocal calm of the close of *Paradise Lost* becomes the acknowledgment of one exile that he is irrecoverably wounded, of the other that she yearns for her prelapsarian strange wild lover. At the moment of her husband's utmost agony, "O my strange wild lover, come back to me again!" cries Bertha. It is kittenish malaise. It is that and it is more. The neurotic woman is a parody of the exiled Eve.

"The soul being unable to become virgin again" is the image around which Joyce chose to construct his drama of beings inadequate to the Miltonic holding of every instant before the searchlight of the conscious will. He chose that image because it was the inadequacy of that formulation to mankind that he sought to epiphanize, not just the inadequacy of mankind to the formulation. "The soul . . . not having energy enough to cast itself out again into the ocean of another's soul" is a human fact, not an affront to Ibsenite idealism. "We cannot swear or expect eternal fealty", but neither can we unaided perpetually repeat the act of love and giving. Beatrice cannot perform it at all: Beatrice is "the diseased woman". But Bertha has performed it once, and Bertha is a human limit. (There is a superhuman limit: but Joyce omits the saints.) The "battle of both our souls, different as they are, against all that is false in them and in the world. A battle of your soul against the spectre of fidelity, of mine against the spectre of friendship"—the battle that Robert proposes to Richard is irrelevant to the context of their plight. It is not "a victory of human passion over the commandments of cowardice" that will solve their exile. It is not the commandments of cowardice that inhibit a repetition of the act of love. The conventional marriage into which Bertha and Richard are settling down is not a retreat

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but as much of a fulfilment as is allowed. As the family, so the City. The City is not a refuge from the demands of alert living, but the context of meaningful life.

In *Finnegans Wake,* the dramatic phase of his second cycle as *Exiles* of his first, Joyce sought to reverse for the West that current that has flowed from Milton's exile-myth into the romantic night-world. He worked in that last book with the help of a prime romantic attempt to make the soul virgin again, Lewis Carroll's, with an intention that can be described as restoring the pastoral child in Wonderland to the City. There is nothing in the *Wake* that isn't potentially present in *Exiles,* however, and the last pages of the later work carefully recapitulate the last pages of the earlier.

The quality of Bertha's yearning is reproduced, but the soul is allowed finally to cast itself out on the ocean that gave it being. At last, via its analogies with human affection, the dimension of sanctity enters. "Highhearted youth comes not again," as we are told in "Bahnhofstrasse", and as it is put in another poem in *Pomes Penyeach.*

> *O hearts, O sighing grasses,*
> *Vainly your loveblown bannerets mourn!*
> *No more will the wild wind that passes*
> *Return, no more return.*

"You took me—and you left me," Bertha tells Richard. "You left me and I waited for you to come back to me." She asks him to "Forget me and love me again as you did the first time. I want my lover. To meet him, to go to him, to give myself to him." But this can only be done in what would be a new life, each of them restored to virginity, meeting once more. That is one meaning of the metempsychosis theme that runs through Joyce's work: redemption. The river perpetually reborn, laving the City and returning to the sea, is an image of daily life perpetually redeemed, as for Bertha and Richard it is not likely to be redeemed. Here is Bertha's longing at full length:

> BERTHA: Yes, dear. I waited for you. Heavens, what I suffered then—when we lived in Rome! Do you remember the terrace of our house?
> RICHARD: Yes.
> BERTHA: I used to sit there, waiting, with the poor child with his

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toys, waiting till he got sleepy. I could see all the roofs of the city and the river, the *Tevere*. What is its name?

RICHARD: The Tiber.

BERTHA: (*Caressing her cheek with his hand.*) It was lovely, Dick, only I was so sad. I was alone, Dick, forgotten by you and by all. I felt my life was ended.

RICHARD: It had not begun.

BERTHA: And I used to look at the sky, so beautiful, without a cloud and the city you said was so old: and then I used to think of Ireland and about ourselves.

RICHARD: Ourselves?

BERTHA: Yes. Ourselves. Not a day passes that I do not see ourselves, you and me, as we were when we met first. Every day of my life I see that. Was I not true to you all that time?

RICHARD: (*Sighs deeply.*) Yes, Bertha. You were my bride in exile.

BERTHA: Wherever you go, I will follow you. If you wish to go away now I will go with you.

RICHARD: I will remain. It is too soon yet to despair.

One by one, in Anna Livia's great final speech, the materials recur: "It seems so long ago, ages since. As if you had been long far away."

The poor child with his toys—"Or see only a youth in his florizel, a boy in innocence, peeling a twig, a child beside a weeny-white steed. The child we all love to place our hope in for ever."

The roofs of the city and the river—"Agres of roofs in parshes. Dom on dam, dim in dym. And a capital part for olympics to ply at."

The sky, so beautiful, without a cloud—"My great blue bedroom, the air so quiet, scarce a cloud."

You and me, as we were when we met first—"Sea, sea! Here, weir, reach, island, bridge. Where you meet I. The day. Remember?"

Wherever you go I will follow you—"It's Phoenix, dear. And the flame is, hear! Let's our joornee saintomichael make it. Since the lausafire has lost and the book of the depth is. Closed. Come! Step out of your shell! Hold up you free fing! Yes."

And the strange wild lover: Bertha's "I want . . . to meet him, to go to him, to give myself to him," becomes Anna Livia's "One time you'd stand forenenst me, fairly laughing, in your bark and tan billows of branches for to fan me cooly. And I'd lie as quiet

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as a moss. And one time you'd rush upon me, darkly roaring, like a great black shadow with a sheeny stair to perce me rawly. And I'd frozen up and pray for thawe. . . . But you're changing, acoolsha, you're changing from me, I can feel. Or is it me is? I'm getting mixed. Brightening up and tightening down. . . . And it's old and old it's sad and old it's sad and weary I go back to you, my cold father, my cold mad father, my cold mad feary father, till the near sight of the mere size of him, the moyles and moyles of it, moananoaning, makes me seasilt saltsick and I rush, my only, into your arms." The father whom she shuns ("Save me from those therrble prongs!"—God's thurible, Neptune's trident, and the generative organs of *der Herr*) is both like and other than the husband who has turned from her. On the natural level, a long-married woman toys with the notion of going back to her people ("I'll slip away before they're up") but shrinks from the thoughts of a parental interview (a peripeteia of Eveline in *Dubliners*). On one allegorical level, she shrinks from the husk her husband has become, and longs for his earlier self ("If I seen him coming down on me now under whitespread wings"—Viking ships entering the Liffey—"like he'd come from Arkangels, I sink I'd die down over his feet, humbly, dumbly, only to washup"). She would gladly lave those vessels as Magdalene washed the feet of Christ: the emotions of *time Jesum transeuntem* are woven into her situation. On the anagogical level, she is borne ineluctably toward the Face she would not meet. Her husband was Christ in her life. The two fuse, the one she is leaving, the one she goes to meet. The keys—"How you said how you'd give me the keys of me heart." ("My", not "your" heart. Cf. the freedom Richard offered Bertha.) "And we'd be married till dealth to uspart."—are fused with the keys that were given Peter in the "tu es Petrus" on the first page of the book. "The keys to. Given!" That is the cry that Bertha cannot utter.

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JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY

The Word Was His Oyster

SOMEWHERE ANDRÉ MALRAUX HAS REMARKED that whenever criticism is confronted with an artist or a writer who has created a new vision of the world it tries at once to find a clinical explanation of the phenomenon. We hear so often, for example, of the astigmatism of El Greco and of the deafness of Goya in explanation of their genius. To explain Joyce's, his feeble sight is inevitably emphasized: is it not natural that Joyce should have enjoyed an abnormal development of his auditory sense in compensation for his practical blindness?

There is no question of Joyce's interest in music. And the structural approach in *Finnegans Wake* may certainly be seen as an adaptation of the simultaneous development of independent melodies in counterpoint. But because of Joyce's feeble sight his close acquaintance with painters and his familiarity with their theories are commonly disregarded in considering his methods of literary expression. In fact, most often, critics have shown a tendency to exaggerate the consequences of Joyce's threatened blindness. Even in one of the best appreciations of Joyce it is stated that "the strangest feature" of his dream vision, *Finnegans Wake*, "is that it lacks visual imagery." Entirely aside from whether this is true or an exaggeration, it is clear that the writer has forgotten for the moment that "The word was Joyce's oyster", in the phrase of the Irish critic Niall Montgomery,—not the world. And if Joyce as an artist in the verbal medium made use of the painter's approach to expression, it was not by "painting word pictures", but by treating words and verbal images as painters treat visual shapes and images in an effort to find fresh realizations in their medium.

It was certainly not to urge his friend Arthur Power to imitate the visual imagery of the *Book of Kells* that Joyce advised him to study it, on the day when Power, as he recalls in *From an Old Waterford House*, spoke to him in Fouquet's about his uncertainty along what lines he should proceed "among all the jarring claims of modernity."

"In all the places I have been to," Joyce told him, "I have taken [Edward Sullivan's reproduction of] it about with me and have gone to it for inspiration poring over its workmanship for hours. It is the most purely Irish thing we have and some of the big initial letters which swing right across a page have the essential quality of a chapter of *Ulysses*. Indeed you can compare much of my work to the intricate illuminations. Study it and see what it can give you,——".

Frank Budgen, the English painter and close companion of Joyce in the Zurich days, recalls, in his reminiscence *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses*, that Joyce once questioned him about the "Cyclops" episode of *Ulysses* in

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Barney Kiernan's public house in Little Britain Street. The scene ends all movement and violence with the angry Citizen hurling a beer pot at Bloom as he whirls off up the street in a jaunting car. —"And they beheld Him even Him, ben Bloom Elijah, amid clouds of angels ascend to the glory of the brightness at an angle of forty-five degrees over Donohoe's in Little Green Street like a shot off a shovel."

"Does this episode strike you," Joyce asked Budgen, "as being futuristic?"

"Rather cubist than futurist," Budgen replied. "Every event is a many sided object. You first state one view of it and then you draw it from another angle to another scale, and both aspects lie side by side in the same picture."

Possibly Joyce felt differently about it. Perhaps Budgen was as correct as Joyce in his view of the episode, in spite of the evident emphasis on movement and violence which ties in so well with the interests of futurist art. Joyce apparently made no rejoinder. However, it is amusing to find a few pages later in Budgen's book a passage in which he writes, "At one time in Zurich I wanted to learn Italian and, as a reading exercise, Joyce lent me Boccioni's book on futurism."

And if Budgen at the time was not quite so familiar with futurism and its theories as Joyce apparently was, as a painter he certainly recognized the kinship between a contemporary painter's concept of his expression and Joyce's treatment of his subject matter, even in those relatively early days when *Ulysses* was still in the process of completion. He recognized in Joyce's attitude towards his medium—words—an attitude similar to that of a painter towards his material—the shapes and colors that convey his images. He recalls Joyce on one occasion reprimanding him for not quoting some of the actual words of an author he was praising.

"Tell me something of it in his own words. . ."

"Do you think that is necessary?" Budgen asked.

"I do," Joyce replied. "When you talk of painting to Taylor, Sargent, or Suter (fellow painters of Budgen in Zurich), you don't talk about the object represented, but about the painting. It is the material that conveys the image of the jug, loaf of bread, or whatever it is, that interests you. And quite rightly I should say," Joyce concluded, "because that is where the beauty of the artist's thought and handiwork becomes one."

In other words: the word.

Joyce, Budgen felt, "may be musical in taste rather than pictorial yet his view of life is that of a painter surveying a still scene, rather than that of a musician following a development through time." In Budgen's view Joyce was primarily a contemplative artist. "Such an artist sees the world as standing still, not advancing or retreating."

It was by just such a seeming timelessness in art that the Italian futurists set greatest store. They made a fetish of dynamism—of force and movement—

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and sought above all to represent movement in their painting. But they felt that movement was most fully expressed pictorially not in a serial representation of different phases of moving form as we have it on a cinema film, nor as it is suggested by the conventional representations of forms in motion. They felt that images—relatively transparent—of different chronological stages of a form in motion should be laid one over another, in order to convey a sense of simultaneity through the composite.

And if we follow the development of Joyce's mode of literary expression from the period of *Stephen Hero,* the surviving fragment of the early draft of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (which Joyce had set out to destroy), through *A Portrait,* through *Ulysses,* down to *Finnegans Wake,* it becomes clear how Joyce in this final work achieved a simultaneity of expression similar to what the Italian futurists were aiming at, but far more complete than they could possibly achieve in a pictorial medium. This too becomes doubly clear through a study of Joyce's changes in approach between the early work and the later, and between revisions of different versions of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake.*

For example, if we consider some passages taken haphazard from *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait* we find that in both these works Joyce is still following the conventional chronological order of descriptive writing, just as conventional painters at the time were attempting to produce naturalistic, descriptive representations. Take a passage, for example, from *Stephen Hero*:

> The very morning after this Father Butt returned Stephen's monologue in kind. It was a raw nipping morning and when Stephen, who had arrived too late for the Latin lecture, strolled into the Physics Theatre he discovered Father Butt kneeling on the hearthstone engaged in lighting a small fire in the huge grate.

Or this from *A Portrait*:

> The boys were all there, kneeling in their places. He knelt among them, happy and shy. The altar was heaped with fragrant masses of white flowers; and in the morning light the pale flames of the candles among the white flowers were clear and silent as his own soul.

Both are examples of simple, progressive prose: conventional description.

But when we come to *Ulysses* and compare the first of the printer's final galleys[1] with the actual published version, we find something else happening. We find that instead of a conventional progressive order Joyce has turned to a compositional order based on, or perhaps better adorned or developed by, associations of words or phrases, one with another.

For example, in the first galley pulled by the printer for *Ulysses* we read the passage on page 149 of the American edition in this form:

> A sombre young man, watchful among the warm sweet fumes of Graham Lemon's, placed a throwaway in a hand of Mr. Bloom.

[1]Lent to the author by Mrs. Dan Rhodes Johnson.

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> Heart to heart talks.
> Bloo . . . Me? No.
> Blood of the Lamb.
> His slow feet walked him riverward, reading. Are you saved? All are washed in the blood of the lamb, Elijah is coming. Dr. John Alexander Dowie, restorer of the church in Zion, is coming.

In the final version "the sombre young man" becomes "a sombre Y.M.C.A. young man"—merely more specific. But then the last paragraph grows by the injection of associated words and phrases.

> All are washed in the blood of the lamb. God wants blood victim. Birth, hymen, martyr, war, foundation of a building, sacrifice, kidney, burnt offering, druid's altars. Elijah is coming. Dr. John Alexander Dowie, restorer of the church in Zion, is coming.

A *catalogue approach—by verbal association—but still serial, chronological,* sequent.

In the early work the images were built up by sentences or by clauses. In *Ulysses* we see the functional elements shrunken to associated, evocative words, or at most phrases. Finally in *Finnegans Wake* we see several images condensed into a single word, where the association elements are not phrases or words but syllables, with the result that the word employed becomes *not* a combination of the two or three constituent reference words, but a new word.

For example we read on page 310 a description of the barman pulling a cork out of a bottle of ale in a public house in Chapelizod, a suburb in Dublin:

> Yet is it, this ale of man, for him, our hubuljoynted, just a tug and a fistful . . . When pressures be to our hoary frother, the pop gave his sullen bulletaction and, bilge, sled a movement of catharic emulsipotion down the sloppery slide of a slaunty to tilted lift-ye-landsmen.

The "ale of man" is naturally a "whale of a man", who dispenses ale. "Pressure" makes the bottle of ale "froth hoarily"; but the surprise at this unexpected overflow causes the narrator to suggest, in his description of the hoary frother, an exclamation: "Praises (within "pressures") be to our Holy Father!" And, carrying this association further (in addition to the suggestion of a firearm's report), the statement that "the pop gave its sullen bulletaction" becomes "the Pope gave his solemn benediction," with overtone emphases of "Papal bull" and "edict". "A movement of catharic emulsipotion" describes certain characteristics of the popular Irish drink—cathartic as well as pure—at the same time as it keeps up the reference to the national religion in the recall of one of the most memorable campaigns in nineteenth-century Irish history, the "movement of Catholic Emancipation", the hero of which was Daniel O'Connell. For a popular brand of native ale is named after "the Liberator"; and from O'Connell's portrait on the label, as Joyce says, "his canterberry bellseyes wink wickeding indtil the teller."

The "sloppery slide of a slaunty" is of course the safest way to pour foaming

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ale: to slide it down the side of a glass—the slippery, sloppy side of a slanted glass, intended to be used to wish "Slainte!"—"Your Health!"

All these ideas are now condensed into words rather than phrases, a single word suggesting two or three parallel ideas. In this way we see Joyce achieving a simultaneity of image—one image superimposed on another within a single word, or set, as it were, within the other, rather than following serially in the normal prose order, as in Joyce's first books, or inventorially, as in the excerpt quoted from *Ulysses*.

According to the Italian Futurist painters of 1909-1913, and one should remember that Joyce was living at the time in Trieste, an Italian-speaking city—a painter, in full realization of modern scientific life, acquires a sense of speed that eliminates time and space. He sees all things at one point and expresses total vision, together with the sources of the accompanying emotion. Universal dynamism was the avowed subject matter of futurist art. According to them, simultaneity was the lyrical exponent of our present conception of life, and they identified this universal dynamism with reality as consisting of an "unending succession of its manifestations." A simultaneous interpenetration of surfaces is the process by which the futurist painters composed their pictures out of conventional images, one image superimposed on another, one transparent part here, another there. This was how the futurists set about creating the unity of their picture—the picture was the main thing—the picture rather than what it represented. "Space no longer exists," their leader, Umberto Boccioni, wrote—and we recall, that Joyce advised Budgen to read him—"A street pavement wet with rain and illuminated by electric lights sinks down to the centre of the earth. Distance means nothing. Time means nothing." But we can see in Joyce's condensations of images into a single word how much more fully he achieved their ideal simultaneity than they ever could in their less flexible media of painting or sculpture.

In all art the primary task is to give a new meaning to the signs employed. This is normally achieved by bringing together two or more signs not commonly associated so that their combination tends to change their meaning. The signs may be lines, shapes, forms in painting—even colors; or words, phrases, sentences in poetry. In 1884 Mallarmé, in his preface to René Ghil's *La Traité du Verbe*, wrote of "Le vers qui de plusieurs vocables refait un mot total, neuf, étranger à la langue . . . "

Joyce in *Finnegans Wake* condensed the *mot total* of Mallarmé to a word-length; and in this way—whether after the example of counterpoint in music, or the theories of the futurists—for all his feebleness of sight, he created a new, therefore unfamiliar, type of visual imagery—through "the word".

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JOSEPH KERMAN

Terror and Self-Pity: Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*

THE SUCCESS OF *Wozzeck*, after its premiere in 1925, did not extend very far west. In any case it was soon afterwards suppressed, and no wonder, with its prophetic gallery of Nazi grotesques: the concentration-camp scientist, the Storm Trooper, and the sadistic, philosophizing coward. It took perhaps the actualization of these types, as well as the recent suspension of disbelief in the twelve-tone school of composition, to prepare the English-speaking countries for Berg's opera. *Wozzeck* has at last made its strong effect upon us, and made it as always on an audience much wider than the customary opera or contemporary music crowds. To many serious amateurs who have not even seen it on the stage, *Wozzeck* is a dramatic presentation of novel vitality, and something of a revelation as far as *dramma per musica* is concerned.

Wozzeck is said also to have stirred up a famous critical furor, but there is no echo of it in this country. That is on account of the local primitive state of music criticism. In revenge, we have circulating here a *Guide to Wozzeck* written some time ago by Willi Reich, a document as official as the tacit approval of the composer, the loud blessings of the *Musical Quarterly*, and enthusiastic quotations by everybody else can make it. What I find in this not merely foolish but downright malicious are the terms which it seeks to impose upon the art of opera. Analysis of *Wozzeck* into its purely-musical forms means nothing to the theatre-goer, who is all unobsessed by the problems of unity in contemporary absolute music; if he does turn to a "guide", it is presumably for illumination of *Wozzeck's* dramatic force. It matters to him not one iota, for instance, that in Marie's monologue "the severity of the architecture leads to the following construction: the two-part theme, consisting of antecedent and consequent, has seven measures; it recurs seven times in varied forms; moreover the concluding double fugue, corresponding to this two-part form, has two seven-tone themes." But how absurd; it is again the old confusion between the preoccupations of the writer and the legitimate interests of the ordinary and essential audience. To the extent that any of Reich's organizations are dramatically sensible, they may be considered in place. First there are less esoteric matters to be raised, in the proper but little-discussed terms of the musical theatre.

Naturalism. Ultimately the deepest source of *Wozzeck's* power is a certain large and sentimental emotional rhythm, produced by the music alone, which I speak of later as the opera's central musical action. There are two other important sources: *Wozzeck's* atmosphere of abnormality, and the concurrent

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naturalistic illusion. On this illusion a great deal depends: the terror of the physical action; the particular effect of the more essential musical devices; the sense of neurosis that the abnormality assumes, and the impact, perhaps the saving impact, of the final scene.

In recreating, in realizing Georg Buechner's dramatic fragment in music, Berg accentuated its naturalistic elements; naturalism is his primary mode of presentation. In this respect *Wozzeck* stands at the end of a development: late romantic opera, along with all late romantic arts and the drama in particular, had long been inclined towards realistic treatment on various planes. A great step was taken, for instance, when Wagner at last honestly leveled out aria and recitative, so that a single continuity, not a formal duality, was provided for the action. Another sort of literalness was cultivated by Strauss, when he represented by a series of scratchings very high on the double-bass the successive parting of the skin, tendons, gullet, windpipe and vertebrae of John the Baptist's neck. Berg's particular *tour de force* was to work without a fresh libretto; to set a stage play verbatim—and a naturalistic one at that (compare Maeterlinck's *Pelléas* or Wilde's *Salome*). To fashion an opera out of the spoken theatre is not ordinarily so mechanical a matter, as can be seen from the librettos of Shakespeare-Boito, Beaumarchais-da Ponte, and Sophocles-Hofmannsthal. As I understand it, the texts of Buechner available when Berg started work on *Wozzeck* were remarkably corrupt. Be this as it may, Berg simply omitted certain scenes from the then current version, and used the others effectively word for word. Here and there he shortened or rearranged a speech very slightly, modernized or bowdlerized a word, or economized with minor characters; one fine change made the spectators at Wozzeck's death the Captain and the Doctor instead of anonymous passers-by. Otherwise he stayed as close to the play before him as Debussy did with *Pelléas*.

The results of such literalness are far-reaching. For while many operas include a certain amount of naturalistic dialogue, none carry it so relentlessly all the way through. At no time is the listener presented with poetry (as in *Pelléas*) or utter nonsense (as in *Tristan*) or stereotyped formulations of standard simple feelings (as in most Italian opera); it is always real talk, with no stops for formalized reflection. This is true even of Marie's monologue, which, unlike a Shakespearean soliloquy or an Italian aria, is treated as realistically as possible—these are actual audible mutterings. Marie, who is no doubt an insecure reader, has to spell out aloud from the Gospel, and has further to interrupt herself for words to comfort the child. The whole opera, in short, moves at the pace of life, not at some conventionally accepted musical pace, nor, as is often the case, at the pace of life with certain calculated and climactic exceptions. No wonder *Wozzeck* seems unnaturally concentrated in action as well as in musical idiom; music heightens the naturalistic action, but is never allowed to decelerate it.

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The second naturalistic technique is the vocal writing, though more obviously and more essentially perhaps this contributes to the peculiar abnormality of the opera's world. Technically speaking Berg uses many vocal styles. Sometimes he demands plain speech, not sung at all; elsewhere he specifies at least three different blends of *Sprechstimme,* half-spoken and half-sung, with pitches indicated but to be followed only roughly. During most of the opera the words are sung, but the listener distinguishes many varieties here too, from fantastically chromatic and disjunct lines close indeed to *Sprechstimme,* to an approximately Straussian type of declamation. Though it is no doubt heretical to say so, let us trust our ears: in whatever style the vocal line hardly ever gells relevantly with the orchestra. Thus a constant artificiality of previous opera is denied, whereby the singing line, even if it declaims unmelodiously, is always integrated with a musical accompaniment. One always hears pitches and chords; the words of the singer are qualified by a musical web which conveniently, but quite arbitrarily, is made to adapt itself to them. But even most of the sung parts in *Wozzeck* refuse to adhere to their accompaniment, because they are too disjunct and chromatic, and that accompaniment is too dissonant. The voice as a musical instrument is careless of pitch, and not nimble with complex widespread patterns; nor does the ear instantly resolve imprecisions in a harmonic idiom so complex as that employed by Berg and Schoenberg. These deficiencies had better be turned to good account, especially for the opera house, where they are certain to be aggravated. In *Wozzeck* Berg approaches the kind of realism of a movie sound-track, in which speech and music are essentially disjoined. At the same time he courts its limitation, that the music acts as comment only and not integrally as part of the action. The pit is brought out into the audience instead of up on to the stage.

Of course there is a subtle gradation, corresponding to the gradation from song to speech, between integration and superposition. A clear instance of lack of integration, clear because the accompaniment for once is simple, occurs in the brief section of the second tavern scene during which Margret and the chorus accuse Wozzeck. The words are *ganz gesungen,* but the vocal lines have nothing to do with the accompaniment, a series of bare major-seventh-chords on low instruments slowly rising up the chromatic scale in parallel motion, with each chord rhythmicized according to the prevailing rhythm of the scene. Such a chromatically rising bass is an ancient and always effective device for creating tension. What is original here is that it proceeds alone, while the voices carry out their part independently, not tied conventionally to this purely-musical pattern of the orchestra.

As this example suggests, Berg was most imaginative with new and old musical means to underpin details of dramatic action. In this it might be maintained that boundless, audacious experimentation was his greatest strength; characteristic of *Wozzeck* is its search for, and (almost always) its triumphal

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achievement of all conceivable kinds of musical effect. Eclecticism in *Wozzeck* has been pointed out by the brilliant critic of *Music Survey* and the *Music Review,* Mr. Hans Keller, for whom indeed eclecticism is "the strongest cause of Berg's popularity", and material for a tardy but well-detailed psychoanalysis of the composer. This is being much too brilliant, but it was and still is worth emphasizing that *Wozzeck* capitalizes on a great many sources—French, Italian, and German. I take this as a kind of Elizabethan gusto for the assimilation of every resource within reach, a side symptom of *Wozzeck's* highly experimental spirit, which is quite understandable in a first opera written for the German theatre between 1917 and 1921, and by a composer in the self-conscious heat of revolution. What bravado, for instance, to have written out the snoring in the barracks scene as a five-part male chorus, for all of nine bars of music! and to have coarsely mated Mahler and Stravinsky in the magnificent first tavern scene! Nothing was too extreme that could add another shock to Buechner's shocker, and another element of force to this arrogantly, fascinatingly overloaded score. When necessary Berg can outbrutalize Strauss, though he is rarely so blatant. He can evoke a mood as perfectly as Debussy, though he is rarely so sensuous. The eerie, impressionistic representation of the ripples on the pond as Wozzeck comes up and goes down for the last time is infinitely more horrible than Strauss' lingering decapitation of the saintly, tiresome Jochanaan. All in all, the orchestral music of *Wozzeck* is apt to sound to us like very striking film music. The way Berg whisks up the curtain to a harp glissando is enough to grit the teeth. Hollywood learned from Vienna, and *vice versa;* Berg's next opera *Lulu* uses a silent film as entr'acte.

From Reich's official *Guide to Wozzeck* the practised reader can gingerly pick out information about many other elements that point up action on the stage. But he must not imagine that because the incessantly experimenting composer is said to have devised a different kind of purely-musical organization for each one of the fifteen scenes, that these organizations are necessarily of any dramatic relevance. Marie's predicament is not squared or cubed by that "severity of architecture" juggled around the number seven—nor can I in my most cabalistic mood count fewer than eight tones in the second fugue subject. On the other hand this scene gains when the listener hears a repeated if irregular flux between a quiet diatonic style and a more excited chromatic one. The character of these two parts of the "theme", built up partly from Marie's leitmotive intervals, and corresponding generally to her reading from the Bible and her subjective outcries, is preserved in the free variations. A more obvious device is what Reich is pleased to call an "Invention on a Rhythm"; frenzy is achieved in the tavern scene after Marie's murder by building it around a single, much-repeated rhythm which even distorts the declamation (nevertheless, this is the poorest scene in the opera). The murder scene itself, which Reich is pleased to call an "Invention on a Tone", revolves clearly around the note *B.* It becomes

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more ominously insistent until, in the scene-change, it is heard all alone in a famous gut-bursting crescendo, which resolves deceptively into the low-down polka of the next scene—a vain distraction for Wozzeck. But to link up this note with the gonged *B* that ends the previous act! Throw out any implication that paper "strictness" gives an opera mystical, unheard unity. This is the same kind of *aberratio mentalis partialis* that leads to the assertion that Wozzeck committed suicide—on some obscured, subconscious level, I suppose they mean. What the play says is that the man was unhinged and fell into the water.

Inventive musical illustrative techniques, the dissociated speech, and the naturalistic pace combine in *Wozzeck* to achieve one simple thing which had better not be overlooked: the shock of the story, on its primary level as a thriller, is put across with a force hitherto and as yet unapproached in opera. The plot itself, of course, though not so extreme as Berg's later extravaganza on Wedekind, probes deeper into lower-depths squalor, lunacy and blood than any previous libretto of importance. This cannot fail to impress on some plane when it is handled as genuinely and as vividily as in *Wozzeck*. Berg's achievement is best seen by placing the opera up against such mild *verismo* entertainments as *Carmen* or *Cavalleria* or *The Consul* on the one hand, and against fantastic explosions like *Salome* and *Elektra* on the other. It succeeds not only by musical violence, but by musical imagination; not only through its lurid plot, but by its dramaturgy.

Psychosis. To point up the action is only one function of dramatic music. Another, which Reich does not mention, is to strike the opera's special mood and form its special world. Opera has this great power to present its section of life in a very particular and unified light; I should say on this account that operas have more individual personalities than spoken plays. Wagner capitalized greatly on this, but so did Mozart in *Così fan Tutte* and the *Magic Flute;* compare also the worlds of *Rigoletto, Traviata,* and *Trovatore.* In no opera is this quality so impressive as in *Wozzeck.* What one is aware of first, immediately and unmistakably, is that the naturalism is clouded by some species of abnormality. The exact sense of this abnormality is even more problematic than the musical means that go to create it.

Of these the first must be the vocal writing. I have mentioned the variety of styles used by Berg; this provides a rich continuum of song-to-speech, from Marie's lullaby to the Captain's final *kommen Sie schnell!*, with no discrete break between. Ordinary speech is thereby cunningly integrated. But the point is that the constant shifting within this continuum produces a very curious confusion in the listener between the proper bounds of formalized musical declamation and of precise representation of speech, albeit speech of persons in horrible extremity. Considered solely as recitative, *Wozzeck* would sound like Strauss made even more hysterically unreal; considered solely as heightened speech, it would sound like a grotesque caricature of old-style

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elocutionary delivery. The interaction of these modes adds a compelling reality to the former, and the credibility of distance to the latter. It is their confusion, I believe, that builds into the illusion of a naturalistic but genuinely artistic hysteria, lying just below the level of the naturalistic and often prosaic dialogue.

A second means towards this illusion is the idiom of the orchestral music, though it is even harder to see just how this is so. It is surely not simply on account of the techniques cultivated by the original twelve-tone composers; though no doubt on a sub-artistic level their abrupt irregular rhythms, discontinuous orchestration, widely-spaced chromatic lines and dissonant texture evoke emotional reflexes that are more strained than, say, those suggested by the idiom of Mozart. But the listener is always anxious to forget such things. Music is surprisingly resilient, and with a little coaxing from the composer it will set up its own imaginative coherence, its own highly conventionalized rationale. There is nothing abnormal about *Pierrot lunaire,* whose idiom is from the conservative point of view more consistently perverse than that of *Wozzeck.* This atmosphere in *Wozzeck* must be attributed to Berg's particular magic, just as the strange sublimity of the *Magic Flute* must be attributed to Mozart's. In both of these works the effect is enhanced, though not created, by the fact that the style is not consistent. The orchestral music of *Wozzeck* exhibits a continuum corresponding to the continuum of song-to-speech: from hearty twelve-tone formalism in some places, to tonal romanticism in others, notably in the final interlude (isn't this an "Invention on a Key"?) the listener hears a gradation between normality and abnormality, with the degrees never sure.

Musically then there is a norm of sanity in *Wozzeck,* which assures the abnormality of the rest. But it is important to observe, and I make more of this later, that this norm never asserts itself in connection with the characters of the play. This even goes against the libretto, which has its sane dullards, Marie, Margret, Andres, the Drum-Major, along with its generous share of eccentrics: Wozzeck, who is never quite in his right mind, the Captain and the Doctor, pervert and megalomaniac, and the preaching *Handwerksbursche,* who is marvellously drunk. But in the opera all inhabit a world of hysteria. The ones who thrive best in it are the Captain and the Doctor; for this reason they set the tone of the opera and appear to control its action more than they really do. We see them not as aberrations within the normal world, but as denizens of a distorted world. Wozzeck's reaction to them is significant. He takes them for granted; he does not even protest their persecutions, for captains and doctors are apparently expected to behave as they do.

The one thing that does goad Wozzeck, Marie's infidelity, is the one normal element in the play, coldly considering what Wozzeck is and what Marie is. And we are certainly encouraged to see Marie as coldly as naturalistic methods permit. She is presented clearly as shallow and not too clever; she has been living unmarried with Wozzeck for years, and she makes a practice of sleeping

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with soldiers. Yet in the last act she abruptly dramatizes herself as Magdalen. What has she to regret in accepting the Drum-Major, who attracts her, as against Wozzeck, who cuts a poor figure indeed and (more important) evinces not the slightest sign of affection from her throughout the opera? Marie is a badly inconsistent character, *unless* she is regarded not as a naturalistic figure but as a projection of what Wozzeck wishes her to be. As a matter of fact, Berg's only two significant changes from the original dialogue are made to sentimentalize Marie further. One comes after her tiff with Wozzeck about the earrings; it is rather different to have her end this scene with *Ach! was Welt! geht doch Alles zum Teufel, Mann und Weib und Kind!* instead of Buechner's pointed *Mann und Weib!* Wozzeck (or Berg) would like to see Marie as a paragon of German motherhood, but this is not enough to do it, any more than her lullaby in the first act—a slickly handled aria if ever I heard one. The other departure actually removes an authentic maternal touch from the early texts of Buechner: in Marie's monologue in the last act, Berg was evidently so affected by her morning-after repentance that he could not have Magdalen tell a nonsense tale to quiet the child: *Es war einmal ein König. Der Herr König hatt' eine goldene Kron und eine Frau Königin und ein klein Büblein. Und was assen sie alle?—Sie assen alle Leberwürst. . . .* This would no more do for Wozzeck's Marie than *If I court moe women, you'll couch with moe men* would do for Verdi's Desdemona; Berg substitutes from another scene the considerably less pathetic *Es war einmal ein armes Kind, und hatt' keinen Vater und keine Mutter . . .*, setting it to the most shamelessly sentimental music in this whole score. I think however that it is Wozzeck, for whom the whole world is awry, who does the sentimentalizing.

What I am getting at is possibly clear, and may be clearer yet if *Wozzeck* is compared with Schoenberg's "monodrama" *Erwartung*, which was written in 1909 and obviously influenced Berg's opera greatly in mood and style, both vocal and instrumental. A woman, seeking her lover in a dark wood, comes on or imagines she comes on his dead body, and pours out around it her loves and fears and jealousies. This work evokes none of *Wozzeck's* terror, because it establishes itself consistently within the subconscious; there is no literal-minded sense to its macabre recital, and no musical reference to the literal world without. *Wozzeck* on the other hand is not symbolic but rooted in reality; it does not take place in the dream world, but in the real world seen through abnormal eyes. They are Wozzeck's eyes, and there is certainly something wrong with him. I leave it to Mr. Hans Keller to detail the diagnosis; it looks to me like paranoia, maybe aggravated by the Doctor's dietary experiments. Readers of *Stars and Stripes* recognize this military type; not prosaic Joe or sane Willie but Sad Sack, who accepts as a matter of course the most grotesque indignities. Berg conceives the play with uncanny fidelity through the consciousness of his protagonist. This dissection of a diseased mind gives the piece its supreme

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frisson for the twentieth century as surely as Buechner's blood-sniffing Idiot provided it for the early nineteenth.

Sentimentality. This is all excellent and honest, though it might be styled sensational rather than dramatic. There is no question however that Berg meant more, that his opera aspires to the status of tragedy. The basic trouble, as I see it, is in the assumption that the paranoiac mind is profitable dramatic material. A less precise imitation of sane motives is more relevant and more moving than the most remarkable probing of psychosis; the ultimate art of *Pelléas* or *Tristan* or the *Magic Flute* or *Dido and Aeneas* is denied to *Wozzeck.* The most damaging measure of Berg's failure is that Wozzeck is a complete cipher. He has no personality, no will; he is involved in no conflict or essential action; he is simply obsessed by his obsessions. The only way he can adjust himself to the world of the Captain and the Doctor is by going mad, which he does before the opera begins. Conceivably more might have been made of him, if Berg had not himself been so obsessed by the paranoiac vision. Take the scene with Andres, which is incidentally the most beautiful scene in the opera. He might have played up Wozzeck's poetic ravings, which finally unnerve even the dim-witted Andres; he might have tried to show Wozzeck as, if not a sympathetic person at least an inchoate visionary. But Wozzeck here is definitely more mad than inspired.

The fundamental lack of action is not determined on the basis of the book alone; of course relevant action in opera, though prompted by the libretto, is realized in the music. I maintain that there is no musical action, while the curtain is up, to articulate anything that happens on the stage in any profound way. Music points up details of the physical action and establishes its various shades of abnormality, that is all. But there does happen to be an extremely important kind of musical action in *Wozzeck,* one whose weakness is exactly that it lies outside the action on the stage, but whose strength in its own terms fortifies the opera even more than the naturalistic terror or the neurotic aura. I refer to a powerful rhythm, in emotional terms, of tension and relaxation. This is felt in many scenes between the scene proper and the musical interlude after it, but comes forward in all force only on the largest level: between the opera as a whole and its final interlude, the longest one, before the epilogue of the children. There is no question that the primary level on which *Wozzeck* is experienced is as a series of horrors mounting to this interlude which acts as a great release of tension. Without it the opera would be intolerably taut.

For a moment it is worth pausing to see how extremely clever this whole thing is. During the above discussion of the pace of the opera it should have occurred to the reader that the gain in immediacy and breathlessness of Berg's naturalistic method might involve a serious loss of expressivity. If there were no more to the opera than suggested then, *Wozzeck* would amount simply to a sung play with incidental music. This is effectively what *Pelléas* is; and *Pelléas*

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is an understatement, because an opera composed in this way denies the chief means by which opera becomes powerful: by letting music take its head and seize an emotional crux in its own time and do with it what it can. Understatement was not for Alban Berg. Yet it would have broken the pace of the opera to have conventionalized to the extent of an aria or a Wagnerian aria-substitute; broken the pace and with it the naturalistic illusion. Then the musical expansion that the final force absolutely demands could take place only in the interludes between the scenes. This may be dramatically false, but with a capable composer it will never be anticlimactic. The climax of this opera, as everyone knows who has ears, is not at the beating or the drowning of Wozzeck, nor at either of the attacks on Marie, but at this final interlude—with the curtain down. It is here first that one is allowed leisure to feel what one has witnessed, here first that the enormity can be gauged in emotional terms. (Is this not the Mann-Adorno "break through to the subjective"? I am afraid so.) The curtain is down, and the music now connotes a sanity and a relief in strong contrast to the hysterical world of the stage, which has just been shut off. The primary apprehension of *Wozzeck,* once again, is of tensions resolving to the final interlude, and this apprehension should not be lost sight of in secondary subtleties.

Orchestral passages integrated into opera are Wagnerian in origin; the final interlude of *Wozzeck,* with its parade of leitmotives, is also Wagnerian in method, and post-Wagnerian in sentiment. But it does more than any such interlude previously composed. Its function is no less than that of the Aristotelian catharsis, with the novelty that this is not left to the individual sensibility, but spelled out note for note by the dramatist himself. It is a despotic moment, for nothing is left to the imagination; this is as he feels about the action, and this is as you too shall feel. The opera concerns figures who are too dull, or too far gone, or too occupied with the business of living for coherent feeling; the interlude puts them aside and brings forward the author, only too articulate, to feel for you without any intermediary character, or Prologue, or chorus. Thus the opera gets its forceful passive emotional place without breaking its naturalistic illusion. Or more exactly, this illusion is broken by the curtain, a theatrical convention that Berg was careful not to override.

But as I have already suggested, this great recurrent rhythm, for all its ingenuity and for all its quite terrific force, is the deep dramatic weakness of *Wozzeck.* For it is not *of* the action but *about* the action; it concerns not the play but the audience. The ghastly action itself remains unarticulated, void, and in dramatic terms trivial. And so where is the emotionality of the final interlude directed? It is a firmly self-centered emotionality, unmixed with sympathy for the characters on the stage, from whose dreadful state we are rescued by the curtain, and ordered (by the orchestra) to turn away in self-indulgence. Instead of pity there is the rhythm of terror to self-pity, abnor-

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mality to reason, tension to release. I leave it again to Mr. Keller to confront the ghost of Alban Berg with his soldierly *Doppelgänger*. I am interested in the opera, and in it I see a sentimentality of unusual force and immodesty; immodesty I say because this is no shrinking effect, no subtle effect which takes the ingenuity of a Willi Reich for elucidation, but the primary action of the piece. One can sympathize with Wozzeck only to the extent that one sympathizes with a hunted animal. Berg has misjudged him, and has made a more or less insolent effort to dictate that the audience misjudge him too.

All this is in spite of the final scene which follows the interlude. It is perhaps the most brilliant thing in this brilliant opera, and almost might have been written to plead against the charge just raised. In this epilogue the mood is strongly changed from the hysteria of the rest of the opera, and the sticky German late-romanticism of the interlude. No doubt release and a return to the stage were called for, but it would not have been very satisfactory to have renewed the nightmare, which had been completed, and, for the listener, purged. Instead Berg turned to daylight. It is cold and entirely normal, the most naturalistic scene of the opera: children chanting a singing-game not in the disjunct chromatic lines of Wozzeck's distress, but in the off-key tones of normal group unmusicality. They talk (*ganz gesprochen!*) to Marie's child: You, your mother's dead! Too little to understand or to talk himself, the child answers two notes to giddy up his rocking horse. The other children go out to inspect the corpse; then (a grisly touch neither in Buechner nor in his most imaginative editors) the child follows them out, equally curious. Throughout this short, movie-like epilogue the musical background is level and luminous, practically unrhythmicized by comparison with the rest of the piece, altogether impressionistic; sunlight. We could do without Marie's calling-cards. The music for the child's "Hopp! hopp!" recalls a passage in Debussy's *Gigues;* the final chord for the empty stage is pure Ravel—and what could be more clear-headed than Ravel? It is a final irony: the final *Schrecklichkeit* after the terror is past, understated as life is understated, set as unsentimentally as Berg knew how in the literal world of urchins. The scene is approximately Buechner's, but the imaginative conception is all Berg's.

It is a brutal juxtaposition, and for Berg must have been a heroic one: to place the children's icy reaction next to his and yours, as boiled up in the immediately preceding interlude. This conclusion tends to give a new depth of reality to the psychosis of the earlier scenes, and an unexpected extent to the vision of degradation presented there. It tries to give an objective outlook on Wozzeck's story, to bring it up to the level of sanity. If this scene convinces you, your pleasure at this opera must be very great. For me it comes too late, seems disjoined from the essential business, and smacks much of a trick ending. Was Berg actually interested in probing, or simply in twisting the knife? And for final relevance the action would have to be raised higher yet—higher than the level of consciousness of eight-year-old children.

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The success of *Wozzeck* in America is due to the now famous performance last year by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. This was in concert form, but punctuated by imaginative rough and ready dramatic action. To the recording made at that time most of us owe our impressions of the opera.[1] The conception, the conducting, is superb, and it is not Mitropoulos' fault that as usual on records the voices are too bright for the orchestra. The main thing is that the singers were so brilliantly chosen and so painstakingly coached. As one would expect of Mack Harrell, his Wozzeck is beautifully sung and carefully planned, progressing from numbness to harrowing violence. Though he pays less attention to the notes, Joseph Mordino as the Captain is even finer, a really uncanny characterization. Only Eileen Farrell is not altogether at ease, but at best Marie seems to me extremely difficult to rationalize into the prevailing hysteria. An English *Wozzeck* was soon after staged by the New York City Center Opera Company, and Mr. Frederick Morgan writes as follows about it:

> This production came as a sharp disappointment. After the magnificent 1951 concert-version by the New York Philharmonic, one approached a full staging of the opera with the highest expectations. But the production by the City Center Company was badly assembled and showed unmistakable signs of inadequate preparation. A ridiculously inept two-level set destroyed the naturalistic illusion and cramped the movements of the players (in the tavern-scenes, for instance, the dancing couples were provided with a ledge only a few feet wide to manoeuver on, and seemed in danger of tumbling to the empty lower set). Brenda Lewis, who played Marie on the evening I attended, sang well and gave a satisfactory, if rather statuesque, performance; but Marko Rothmuller's portrayal of the title role was vocally and dramatically coarse. The singers of the supporting cast were generally ineffective, and had evidently not been adequately trained in the techniques required by this opera; this was particularly and fatally true in the case of the Captain and the Doctor. In short, the goings-on on the stage seemed in general to be at odds with, and to detract from, what should have been a stunning total effect.[2]

The Covent Garden production, under Erich Kleiber himself, was by all accounts admirable, as well as successful. No plans are announced for presenting *Wozzeck* at the Metropolitan.

[1]Columbia Masterworks SL-118, $11.90.

[2]It has just been announced that for its performances of *Wozzeck* this Fall, the City Opera has done away with the set and generally overhauled the production.

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GEORGE BARBAROW

Rashomon And The Fifth Witness

RASHOMON IS RICH AS A FRUIT CAKE VISUALLY, and as nutty in structure. Unevenness, imbalance, and wild chaos characterize it; raucous humor is preceded in it by sensuous beauty and followed by deadly serious hysteria; theatrical scenes are placed side by side with bits of pure cinema; at some moments it is a brilliant whodunit, at others a formless philosophical tract; at its end, this prize-winning Japanese extravaganza is indistinguishable from any of a thousand Sunday School plays available at small fee from Samuel French. But after the beginning and before the end, and even during parts of these parts, *Rashomon* is what all movies ought to be as a minimum requirement for mere existence: it is unashamedly photographic, and so it deserves, these days, the loud acclaim and the popularity it has gained. Kurosawa, the director, takes delight in camera images, and fills ninety minutes of screen time with them. Some are graceful, some sentimental, some abstract, some crude and powerful, some ugly, some sensational, some conventionally dull as the *National Geographic*. But no spectator dares close his eyes once Kurosawa has established his main interest in visual images, for to turn away for one moment would be to risk losing some of the priceless pleasure of motion pictures.

The film begins with a veritable deluge of a rainstorm of such photogenic cascadence that one can hardly recollect wetter water; there follows shortly an excursion into a forest, by swiftly moving camera, that reveals interlaced dizzy patterns of branches, trunks, brush, and blazing splotches of sunlight. In the forest, there is a truly cinematic encounter of a man and his wife with a bandit, ending in a three-way duel, the conflict being described in four different ways, each purporting to be the account of a different person. The bandit's narration, the longest because it includes the encounter along the forest road, is followed by the wife's version, the husband's, and at last by a woodcutter's story. Interlarded among these highly colored, contradictory, and hence nearly incredible expositions are scenes of verbal argument and explanation at the police station, and further scenes (during the rainstorm) on the porch of an artistic-looking, half-ruined building, where the woodcutter, a tramp, and a priest discuss What It All Means.

The final and overriding complication is Kurosawa's rampaging camera, essentially a pointless instrument because it points too easily everywhere and anywhere. It is an often brilliant but always unreliable fifth witness that observes each of the others as he talks and as he acts in his own version of the desperate, passionate and violent episode in the forest. There can be no question

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of accepting the testimony of the official witnesses, for Kurosawa—like Shaw, Pirandello, Gide or Sascha Guitry—constantly makes observations that belie the "natural" development of the story, that emphasize the process of the telling in a self-conscious and often irritating manner. These observations are usually photographic: the way the pompous policeman plops into the water, the better to observe at a slightly frightened distance the groaning bandit on the river bank; the way the bandit scratches hurriedly at a louse bite during a deadly sword fight; and the way the medium does too much rolling around on the ground at the expense of more views of the husband preparing himself for suicide. What interests the director in this picture is evidently the employment of whatever good idea he happens to think of, and these improvisations are tossed in without much regard for the entire pattern of the film. Indeed, the picture's pattern is merely fortuitous. Unforgivably theatrical scenes are relieved only by the director's photographic penchant; too much is told verbally; and the panning and traveling shots in the forest, although sensuously pretty, do not clarify the structure of the whole film, and bear not the slightest relation to the theme of the picture, which is moral anarchy.

The theme has been explained very well, much better than the moviemakers have done it, by Parker Tyler, in his essay *How to Solve the Mystery of Rashomon,* a pamphlet recently published by Cinema 16, the film society. Mr. Tyler's main point is that the paralyzing shock of the terrifying episode in the forest accounts for the variations in the four narratives by the human witnesses. Each, in a numbed state, struggles to reestablish his own identity, and talking from his emotions, invents a story, not particularly caring whether or not it fits the facts or another's version of them. It follows that all apparent inconsistencies in *Rashomon* are actually consistent, and that the film is a "masterpiece". Mr. Tyler's encomium is ingenious and unabashed, as unabashed as Kurosawa's enthusiasm for his camera. But a masterpiece of a film is not confused and not confusing, as *Rashomon* is. It does not, and should not, like *Rashomon,* imitate in a protean manner the anarchy it proposes to reveal. A film ought not to be a hodge-podge or a rag-bag, a veritable anthology of narrative styles, especially when the director possesses the fifth witness and does not fully control it. That he does not control it all the time is plain enough from the opening title and from the priest's opening speech: the events to be shown take place in a time of wars, fires, famines, earthquakes, typhoons, a time of death and destruction, hence also a time of moral decay. This stuff is verbal, and verbal stuff carries small conviction on the screen. There should be and could be better evidence that this is a time of disasters, a time when the unnatural becomes natural, when the cultural and social order is shaken to the center. What is needed in the film is cinematic evidence having the cogency of the dramatic evidence in the wonderfully articulate beginnings of *Macbeth* and *Hamlet.* It is all very well to start with an excellent rainstorm, but rain is

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not an earthquake and a sword fight is not a war, and a moviemaker who must rely on a direct title to make a main point is not a master.

The baby is the worst. At the end, the woodcutter is caught in a lie about his version of the forest episode. The tramp sneers. The priest feels more pain, since his faith in man is already badly damaged. Then a baby's cry is heard. It is a foundling. The tramp steals the baby's rich bedding and then leaves, as he denounces the hypocritical woodcutter for attempting to stop the theft. The latter worthy attempts to take the baby, is rebuffed by the horrified priest, then gets the baby by declaring he will bring it up as one of his own children. The priest having regained his faith, and the bathos having been multiplied unconscionably, the rain stops; and so the picture ends in a cliché so wild that Broadway audiences were able to recognize it as a joke in *Boy Meets Girl: My Gawd!, cries the grizzled prospector as he stumbles over something soft in the snow. My Gawd! A Baby!* Mr. Tyler, embarrassed by the baby, believes "the film would have remained intact without it", but we might ask how the film could have ended much differently, since the theme is expressed not by the action and visual structure of the picture but by a number of stiff and dull verbalisms of the *c'est la guerre* variety.

Such misfortunes reduce the very real pleasure and intense excitement generated by portions of *Rashomon* where sights and actions escape the inhibitions of playlet forms, but they cannot completely destroy the vitality of Kurosawa's shots. Even the slowest of "message" scenes can be sat through just by studying the compositional patterns on the screen. And when a sequence is going strong, as in the two sword fights, which are meant to be compared one with the other, the work is magnificent.

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GEOFFREY RANS

London Letter

WHILE IT IS AN OVERDONE ENGLISH CUSTOM to blame the Government for the weather, it would not be entirely unfair to make the new Government partly responsible for the frost that is striking certain aspects of our cultural life. However, it is not a new situation that we face but the intensification of an old one. Rising prices are playing havoc with the publishing business; owing to the rise in paper costs, books advertised only a short time ago are being advanced in price, in some cases, by twenty per cent before publication. One recent book selling well was increased by almost that much only a few months after it was published. Reprints, cheap editions and paper-backed books have suffered increases nothing short of spectacular over the last two or three years. Standards of book production are inevitably being affected and inferior methods of binding and reproduction are often used. All this is happening at a time when few people can afford to buy books without feeling some financial discomfort. Of course, this is important but I doubt whether it is more important than the acute poverty experienced by our younger writers, whose books fill the remainder shelves and who suffer from a desperately unfair system of taxation. In spite of all their difficulties, I am not convinced that the publishers are not exaggerating their hardships and following too cautious a policy. Students have found it more and more difficult since the war to buy even the essential books for their course, and with the real value of the library grants decreasing as rapidly as it is, the University Faculty Libraries find it no easier to cater adequately to the needs of their students. The situation is complicated by the Government's economies in education, which make it unlikely that up-to-date textbooks, equipment and new buildings, badly needed by too many schools, will be soon forthcoming even when recommended by Her Majesty's Inspectors. There is often too little a local authority, further hampered by a cruelly increased bank rate, can do about it. I don't have to detail the effects these measures are likely to have as deterrents to the production of better educational books. Local authorities, generously supporting orchestras and civic theatres, have in some places been obliged to cut their grants. The Arts Council has mercifully been spared but clearly its money will not go so far, and this reduction of its power may lead to a less extended and adventurous policy. In other words, the outlook is in all directions pretty bleak, and there are no signs of improvement within the foreseeable future; the problems will continue to be ignored as of secondary importance. My pessimism is, of course, personal; but the facts seem to me to justify it. In the preparation for defence, we are seriously impairing too many of the things we are supposed to be defending.

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I certainly hope my alarm is misplaced, but I cannot think that it is; I find it impossible to exaggerate the dangers of present tendencies. It is high time we were allowed to get on with the pursuits of peace.

If the picture is not exactly bright, it is not without its interests and small encouragements; the theatre during this last season has been especially diverting. There was, last year, a serious disagreement about the future policy of the Old Vic organisation that led to the resignation of producers Glen Byam Shaw and Michael St. Denis, and Motley, the firm of designers, all of whom had served the Old Vic well; the touring Young Vic Company went out of existence and the Old Vic theatre school is to close. Hugh Hunt of the previous season's staff was retained as Administrative Director, and Tyrone Guthrie was put in charge as Director; their policy provided for two companies so that the London productions could be shown in the provinces when the London run was completed. Donald Wolfit was engaged for the season, *Lear* was promised, and we should have been happy. But the Old Vic had changed from a forward-looking educational and theatrical organisation into a mere lavish repertory company.

The programme for the season was hailed as an enterprising one—*Tamburlaine, Othello,* Garrick and Coleman's *The Clandestine Marriage, King Lear, Timon of Athens* and a new play by James Forsyth; in one respect it was enterprising, but in some important respects the enterprise was misdirected. It was difficult not to feel suspicious of the choice of *Tamburlaine* and *The Clandestine Marriage*; too often of late had the producers at the Old Vic failed to convince me that they had a greater respect for the play than for the opportunities the play gave them to exhibit their skill at "theatricals". Glen Byam Shaw, with his honest but by no means poverty-stricken *Henry V,* was the exception. Both Guthrie and Hunt in the recent past have used the theatre to debase drama; their productions have too often been full of ingenious but irrelevant business, and overfraught with theatrical pyrotechnics.

And so the season opened with Guthrie's production of *Tamburlaine,* Wolfit in the lead. Let me say at once that, in spite of the reservations I shall make, I would not have wished this venture away; there is no reason why the Old Vic should not be adventurous, but its productions ought always to be honest. Everything about this play was of deMillean splendour—not least remarkable was the stage-management—but unfortunately it was presented as a vehicle for Guthrie's ingenuity; Wolfit, in an astounding performance, was continually fighting against a production that bled the play of what little drama it has. Indeed, the producer was more of a character in the play than Tamburlaine himself. Wolfit's conception of the part seemed to be that Tamburlaine was a man who mastered death and was eventually mastered by it; he continually emphasised the word "death" and played with mighty conviction and a most exact subtlety. Guthrie made his task impossible by producing the enormities

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for their own sensational value rather than as manifestations of Tamburlaine's will. The result was that there were too many artificial climaxes and too little real tension remaining at the final, genuine climax. The problems are enormous, of course, and one would still have felt cheated by Tamburlaine's death in any production; the fault here was that the problems were not faced honestly and frequently were wantonly aggravated. Much of the verse-speaking in this production—as throughout the season—was nothing short of execrable.

A recently reported speech of Guthrie's lends point to these strictures. He said, "There is little need for a producer to coach good actors"; yet the Old Vic, particularly in respect of verse-speaking, has afforded many examples this season, especially in *Lear* and *Othello,* of good actors sadly in need of coaching. He also remarked that "the intuitive idea is the 'alpha-plus' idea, whereas the thought-out idea is always 'beta-plus'." These two comments show up the faults that ran throughout the Old Vic season and much Shakespearean production elsewhere—especially in the universities.

Tamburlaine was succeeded by a poor production of *Othello* that had little other than Irene Worth's Desdemona to recommend it; it "came off" better than Orson Welles' *Othello* mainly because it was played by a better-balanced company, in which Irene Worth really suffered the cruelties of Othello, whereas Welles had been unable to find an actress capable of sharing his climaxes, of making his passion transitive. But for all that, the Welles production was on the whole more intelligent and better-spoken; for one thing, Welles edited the text, if more extensively, with far greater subtlety than did Michael Langham at the Vic, who deprived Iago of some of the lines most revealing of his motivation. This production was followed by *The Clandestine Marriage,* in which Wolfit gave a virtuoso comedy performance amid a great number of theatrical fireworks let off in the effort to brighten up a poor play; it was full of "alpha-plus" ideas. The Christmas offering was an over-produced effort at *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* this was one of the dullest, most tasteless, ill-conceived failures it has ever been my fortune to witness at the Old Vic. When the time came for *Lear* Wolfit had resigned; this production by Hugh Hunt was appallingly spoken and totally unbalanced with its naturalistic playing and conversational verse-speaking against a "poetic" setting. Indeed, the speaking was often so bad that one doubted whether the actors understood what their lines meant. There was a great deal of walking about the stage during important speeches, too much too loud music, too great an insistence on the more bloody events in the play for their own sake rather than for any genuinely dramatic purpose, and no sense of speed whatever (for example in the long-drawn-out exchange that preceded "O reason not the need"); the Lear, Stephen Murray, reduced most of his verse to prose and resolutely refused to vary his cadence with the sense of the line.

This dismal chronicle gives me no pleasure in the writing and is by now

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repetitive and of little interest in itself. Now the Old Vic has had little competition in London during the last four years or so; the fiasco of the Oliviers' Caesar and Antony season[1] at the St. James cannot seriously be considered as real competition unless we take the box-office as our guide. The last time a really different commodity was offered was at the Haymarket in 1944 when we saw Gielgud in *Love for Love* and the George Rylands productions of *Hamlet* and *The Duchess of Malfi*; there indeed was production for the play's sake. At that time it was still possible to see fairly extended seasons by the Wolfit company in London. What bound these two very different companies together in one's mind was their patient, honest but vital humility in the face of a great play. A summer ago, Gielgud returned to London from Stratford in Peter Brook's production of *A Winter's Tale*, and set London and the critics by the ears. What distinguished this production was that all the players seemed to understand what they were saying; they had, in short, been coached and worked into a conception of the play that was prepared to give meaning first importance and to play up to that meaning rather than shy away from it with a mass of irrelevant business. It has become increasingly clear that Gielgud's company is in every sense a unified group playing in complete agreement and understanding; the method that insists on playing with the utmost conviction in the play as written, giving full weight to the poetic quality of the lines, is severely tested in an unlikely play like *A Winter's Tale* and it was completely successful: artistically and, mercifully, at the box-office. It must not be thought that this kind of production in any way resembles a Summer School play-reading; its spirit lends freshness to the text, especially when one remembers the jaded state of mind that led Hugh Hunt vulgarly to over-dress *Twelfth Night* at the Old Vic in 1950. One of the most encouraging aspects of the Gielgud season is the way the younger members of the company seem to have caught from Gielgud his sense of line-length and his emphatic pointing of a line of verse. The critics, however, for the most part praised this production in the same terms as they had praised indifferent performances at the Old Vic, whose progress they have almost unanimously supported for some years; it was "charming", "enchanting", "magical" and so on.

Then Gielgud opened his own production of *Much Ado* almost simultaneously with the Old Vic's *Dream*, and the critics woke up to the fact that there was something seriously wrong; it was so obvious even to the critical midgets of the Sunday press that Gielgud's production was superior in so many respects that most of them started heaving bricks in the direction of the Old Vic with an almost Elizabethan enthusiasm. There was really no justification for this, for there was no essential difference between *The Dream* and the many other

[1]William Becker's notice of the Broadway visit of this company in THE HUDSON REVIEW of Spring, 1952, says all I would say and incidentally touches many of the weaknesses in the English theatre today.

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productions on which they had lavished praise. Anyway, the comparison gave them pause and the opportunity for a lively newspaper correspondence. This not very difficult problem was ultimately resolved by Ivor Brown; he took the situation as an opportunity to knock the principle of subsidised art and extol the virtues of "free enterprise". The solution, you see, is semi-political—not artistic.[2] Even so it is difficult to see how a repertory company—which Mr. Gielgud's is not—could exist competitively in London without some kind of financial aid. It is largely due to this kind of unperceptive, but influential, talk by our Sunday critics that standards of Shakespearean production are so low. The controversy ended lamely in the cricketing tradition of English dramatic criticism with everyone falling over themselves to see fair play for the Old Vic rather than the establishment of decent standards of production there. Even though the point is being missed there is every reason to feel grateful for the Gielgud season, and one hopes that the Old Vic is not too proud to learn.

In many ways the most important and, to me, the most interesting event has been the Eliot-Hoellering film of *Murder in the Cathedral*. In a programme-note Eliot writes that the intention has been to make "a film in which the visual element must support the words, without distracting attention from them, without subordinating words to pictures, and without imposing on the audience a double effort of attention"; in a large measure it succeeds, and where it fails it is either because of the director's creation of pictures so good in themselves that they separate from the words, or because of a failure in literary criticism.

A mass-medium like the cinema obviously demands a compromise, and Eliot has been willing to make it; his play, with its new scene which seems to me to be total gain, at once assumes a greater outwardness; for example, it enables the image of "the hammer and the anvil", the intractable opposition of Thomas and the King, to become fully articulate. The advantages of the camera are clear enough; by a quite simple movement the attention is focussed hard on the person speaking and we can see the words forming on the lips as we hear them; further, it is easier to visualise an intellectual or poetic point in a film than it is on the stage. For example, at one point during the tempting of Thomas we follow his eyes to the crucifix standing on the altar, and the point is made at once; similarly, the extinguishing and relighting of the candles brings out the imagery of the poetry with impressive directness and simplicity; organic also in their different ways are the forging of the sword and the sculpting of the Crucifixion.[3] But the cinema is committed to the visual event

[2]This does not seem quite so foolish now that we have seen James Forsyth's *The Other Heart*, the production of which does seem to indicate an irresponsible attitude towards the disposal of public money. The play was simply not worth producing.

[3]The sword is that forged between the hammer and the anvil of Henry and Thomas, and destined to cut Thomas down. The crucifixion sets the right devotional tone and also foreshadows the martyrdom of Thomas himself.

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in a peculiarly concrete way, and it is this that seems to me to weaken the film's dramatic and poetic approach; the tension in Canterbury is dissipated when we see Thomas on his way—the camera is here too much on our side. We do not need to see and hear how "evil the wind" is, nor do we need the picture of "the corners of the stairs"; by focussing our minds on a particular—often an incidental particular—the director distracts the sustained attention that this play demands. Apart from these visualisations of the concrete reference there is to be considered the attitude of the camera towards the poetic image; the images are in fact taken as if they were facts merely borrowed from life, and it is here that the film's major fault lies. When we are shown an actual rock and an actual sea, no significant point is made about the rock and wave image; all that happens is that the poetry is broken down and we are given less than we previously had—the picture separates from the poetry and exists on its own. Frequently the director composes a picture of such individual beauty that we are distracted from the words altogether; such a one is that of the massed faces of the congregration. But this is carping, for the film is a noble one and its failures are those of honest experiment. However, for popular appeal—and the cinema has to have this—screenplays will have to be specially written; Eliot has made important compromises, but this is not enough, although it will do splendidly for the moment.

My competence does not, I'm afraid, stretch far enough for me to speak with any finality about Benjamin Britten's new opera, *Billy Budd*. Melville's story is obviously well-fitted for conversion into opera and I am sorry that E. M. Forster and Eric Crozier did not make a better-sounding libretto of it—too often it resembles a succession of parsonical platitudes. The fundamental mistake in this opera is the appearance of Vere in the prologue. One can see why Britten did this—he did not want the emphasis to be mislaid—but the effect of this evasion is that the effect of the natural, dramatic placing of the burden on Vere in the course of the action is largely lost; the dramatic point should have been allowed to emerge and the full effect of the irony to be felt. The result is that Vere fails to come off dramatically. While this is a fault, it is far outweighed by the virtues of the opera, both in intention and achievement; Britten, as always, has taken the problems of dramatic construction in music most seriously. It would have been very easy, in view of the absoluteness of the opposition between Claggart and Billy, to fall into crudity; but in fact character is subtly treated without detracting from the essential polarity of the two men. Granted the prologue, Britten makes brilliant use of it; the music that accompanies Vere's rumination on imperfection is next heard associated with Billy's stammer, which is in such moving contrast to his too-late fluency at the trial. Rarely can the device of a repeated theme have been used with such ingenuity and sureness of dramatic touch as in this opera; over and over again an emotional moment is placed in immediate relation with the plot-line;

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one theme in particular, taken up by the chorus during the execution, takes one right back to Billy's arrival on "The Indomitable", but it is used in no sentimental way—it is an economic and dramatic device strictly related to the moment at which it is used; the theme, in short, is never simply remembered. The use at the end of Act III of the 6/8 rhythm that accompanies Billy's ballad at the beginning of Act IV is masterly. The chorus is used with all the dramatic and technical excellence Britten's past would lead us to expect; indeed, the range of musical resource shown in this opera is staggering. It is therefore the more surprising that Britten should show such lyrical diffidence as he does here. *Billy Budd* strikes me as a sincere, artistic and technically assured attempt to reconcile music and drama; Britten has aimed at unity and has near enough achieved it. I am sure that when he finds the right libretto he will make a great opera; meanwhile there is every reason to see *Billy Budd* three or four times, for there is a lot to hear, and a lot to learn from it.

A smug though good-humoured fiftieth anniversary issue of *The Times Literary Supplement* appeared in January; it took the form of a selection of some of the best and worst of the articles it has printed over the last half-century. It was a complete justification of the attacks that Leavis launches from time to time; it had the usual note of tolerant incomprehension. Not that the editor felt he had anything to hide—he even published again the now notorious review of Eliot's *Prufrock*, which was I think merely a symptom of the underlying state of mind that produced the article, "Half a Century of Criticism: making a tradition", in which there is the usual snobbish nostalgia for the old days, the more leisured days, the days of "epigrammatic conversation at tea-time". The explanation of why they have often failed to notice new work of importance is that it would have meant turning "aside from much that is quite as recommendable merely because it is less spectacular". One wonders what *The Times Literary Supplement* was recommending while it was turning aside from Pound and Joyce; it is incredible that anyone could possibly, in 1952, be so naïve as to put forward such an excuse.

There has of late months been a renaissance (or a recrudescence, depending on your point of view) of the "Back to the Twenties" movement, with novels full of gay, charming and amusing people learning about Art and Life in Mediterranean climes; Philip Trower's *Tillotson,* Hugh Wheeler's *The Crippled Muse* and G. Sager's *The Invisible Worm* all seem to be heavily under the influence of Norman Douglas. They are amusing enough, I suppose, even though they have no sense of responsibility towards their characters; they are type-novels in the sense that woman's magazine stories are type-stories, but the reviewers found themselves in sentimental mood. One of them, commenting on *Tillotson,* confessed to an affection for "the Cherubino *manqué* of modern

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fiction". Now, *Tillotson* has its moments and no doubt Mr. Trower's day will come; but this particular book is derivative, its moral is trite, and its writing irritatingly mannered. Mr. Trower cannot let his characters do for themselves and is led to do far too much explanatory writing in order to cover himself. The reviewer I have already quoted was, on the same day, capable of writing this about Faulkner's short stories:

> Now it doesn't do to become hysterical about Faulkner—he does enough of that himself and wants nothing better than for us to follow him blindly into his screaming madhouses of lust, perversion and guilt. For as long as we can we must try to remain detached. . . . And what is it caused by, this cosmic beastliness, this unutterable cruelty and crime? To this question no answer is given: Faulkner thinks of it, therefore it is. But there is other evidence for its existence, much better evidence. Dachau and Belsen perhaps.

Of course, this has a slightly comic ring about it, but the dazed lack of understanding in the face of originality is only too common; what is not so funny is that the people who write this kind of rubbish are widely followed and are, in effect, the arbiters of our national taste.

Perhaps the most considerable novel of recent months is V. S. Pritchett's *Mr. Beluncle*.[4] The seriousness with which Pritchett regards the art of writing fiction is obvious enough in his criticism and compels admiration when it is seen in his novels; this novel is beautifully wrought not only in its style but also in its overall construction. He writes with an admirable clarity without sacrificing subtlety, and his strategy is such that nothing goes unperceived. And the points are made without any marginal gloss; they are made out of the words and actions of the characters. To me, as an Englishman, it seems profoundly comic—in the way *Volpone* is comic; although this novel is so native and the characters so English, it is so complete and its execution so masterly that any suggestion of a merely local appeal would be insulting. Another fairly recent novel is L. P. Hartley's *My Fellow Devils*, yet another conversion novel; nothing Hartley wrote could be inconsiderable, but I find this a profoundly unsatisfactory book. It raises the question how far the novel can depart from narrative as its prime inspiration, how far in fact a story can be twisted to suit a general attitude; *My Fellow Devils* is nothing more than an exemplum. The involvement of character and incident with the theme is altogether insufficient, with the result that there are long passages of downright explanation. And even then the points do not emerge with anything like the clarity of Pritchett's.

We have had very recently a new novel, *Doting*, by Henry Green.[5] His case is a strange one; he has written many an excellent novel and, at the same time, has almost become a popular novelist. There are few living novelists of such

[4]Published in America by Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.
[5]Published in America by The Viking Press. $3.00.

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varied gifts as Henry Green: his ear is faultless, he can create character and mood with great precision and subtlety; he is a brilliant but not vacuous stylist; and he uses symbols in his novels always with great point. Why then should his new novel, which has all these virtues, fail, in the end, completely to satisfy? It has a situation of the kind that Green best understands—he is dealing with people at cross-purposes with one another; there is nothing arbitrary about the book for we get to know his people intimately; his theme, the terrible comedy of human beings unable to understand one another, has a universal enough application. The dissatisfaction, like the satisfaction, springs from the tremendous integration of his work, which amounts on the debit side to an inability to project his art off the page, out of the novel and into life.

The new volume of Robert Graves, *Poems and Satires*, was welcome; it is fortunately no longer necessary to press Graves' claim to attention. The present volume has nothing startlingly new, and most of the old virtues; but I found an unwelcome facility in some of the poems, especially those with a mythical basis, which seem to me contrived. Anne Ridler's *The Golden Bird*, in spite of some of the work being obviously derivative, is an excellent book of verse; she has great clarity and an original sense of form. The long poem in this book is entirely her own; her sense of line and cadence is unerring, and her images, always "known" and never merely found, are worked over until they bend to her sense of unity. Perhaps the most satisfying thing about her poetry is the way it separates from the strain that made it; her poetry exists apart from her in its own right. A similar talent is evident in some of the poems in W. R. Rodgers' uneven volume *Europa and the Bull*, although he may lack as yet Anne Ridler's economy—in fact, he is often effusive. While some of his imagery strikes me as adventitious, he has I am sure, a talent of the first order, and there is in several of these poems an exactness of ear and eye, a tightness of integration, difficult to match in contemporary poetry.

There is, you can see, no lack of activity, but with the present lack of responsible periodicals (although, glory be, we have a new one, *Colonnade*) it is difficult to determine what new writers are doing; but there is no reason to suppose that the writers are not there, only to deplore their lack of opportunity and the poverty of their reward. There is a remarkable new poet in R. S. Thomas; P. H. Newby continues to write—and write well. The musical world is full of activity with new and unfamiliar works being played all the time; among the newer composers, P. Racine Fricker is outstanding and increases his reputation almost daily. Even in criticism we have our special if eccentric contribution to make, as the *T. L. S.* correspondent who pointed out the influence of cricket on *Finnegans Wake* has conclusively demonstrated.

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WILLIAM ARROWSMITH

The Decade of Five Iliads[1]

WRITING SOME NINETY YEARS AGO in his famous criticism of Newman's *Iliad*, Matthew Arnold prophetically remarked: "The study of classical literature is probably on the decline; but, whatever may be the fate of this study in general, it is certain that . . . attention will be more and more directed to the poetry of Homer, not indeed as part of a classical course, but as the most important poetical monument existing." Of the general qualitative decay of classical studies since Arnold wrote, both in America and Europe, there can be no question. It is almost twenty-five years now since, for better or worse, Latin and Greek were dropped as compulsory subjects from the college curriculum; and now classical studies seem to be going, in part, the way of Sanskrit studies and, for the rest, the way of physics: one part dead, the rest abstruse, rarefied and almost unobtainable except by a lifetime's good devotion. Where, in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, the classics were still a unitary field, the indispensable cultural base, they soon became subject to the same fragmentation as the natural sciences: classical history, for instance, became a cluster of such studies as epigraphy, numismatics, and papyrology, while the study of the literatures was reduced to amiable chat or philology-*cum*-palaeography or even to linguistics. This development was unavoidable; and it was as valuable as it was disastrous. In the end, that is, now, classical studies threaten to succumb completely to their own methodologies, and as usual they will be rescued, if at all, not from within—but from without. Their salvation is to come, I would suppose, from whatever independent life the classics have in our culture; for it is, of course, not the classics which are moribund, but classical studies. Yet the distinction between the classics and the classicists is becoming less and less clear, since a knowledge of the ancient tongues has traditionally been the condition of an independent life for the classics, and nowadays competence in both Greek and Latin is so largely restricted to the professional classicists.

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[1]THE ILIAD, translated by E. V. Rieu. Penguin Books. 65c; THE ILIAD, translated by W. H. D. Rouse. Mentor Books. 35c; THE ILIAD, translated from Homer by Alston Hurd Chase & William G. Perry, Jr. Atlantic, Little Brown. $5.00; THE ILIAD of Homer, translated by William Benjamin Smith and Walter Miller. Macmillan. $6.00; THE ILIAD of Homer, translated with an Introduction by Richmond Lattimore. The University of Chicago Press. $4.50.

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It was to this fact perhaps that Arnold referred when he predicted that, whatever the fate of classical studies, more and more attention would be directed to the poetry of Homer. In the event he has been amply borne out. For while classical studies have decayed, the classics at the moment lead a life of amazing energy. When Arnold wrote in 1861, he could speak with pride of two *Iliads* in a decade; here are five, with almost as many translations of the *Odyssey*. Think also of the Pindar of Richmond Lattimore and again of his *Oresteia*; the fine Sophocles of Fitts and Fitzgerald; the two new *Aeneids* of Rolfe Humphries and C. Day Lewis; the superb Penguin Series of classics in prose translation with their remarkable Mattingly Tacitus, their Handford Caesar, the Hamilton *Symposium* or Rex Warner's fine translation of the *Anabasis*. Or again, on another level, of Highet's able apology (*The Classical Tradition*) and Owen's fine commentary on the *Iliad*; Goheen's application of modern criticism to Sophocles (*The Imagery of Sophocles' Antigone*), and the many fine translations of isolated lyrics by modern poets. Finally, consider that—if the report is true—Rieu's translation of the *Odyssey* has reached more than a million sales. It is altogether an impressive show of strength, an achievement which comes as a result of the threat to the independent existence of the classics and is the flowering of conviction, ability and need.

The need arose out of the disappearance of Greek and Latin from among the equipment of the educated man and the failure of many classicists to recognize that it was the classics, and not merely classical studies, which were threatened. Or if classicists did recognize the situation, they believed that they had a choice between "popularization" and "scholarship". There never was such a choice and their ultimate decision could have been seen in their very use of the word "popularization". Of popularization there is no question; the classics will no more be popularized in the English language than they were in Greek and Latin. The question is very simply: can we transplant the classics into the English language? If we cannot, the classics must be turned over to the classicists, and we must renounce the traditional independent life of the classics with all that life has meant. Arnold could not have foreseen this: that the classics would resume their independent life only at the price of being no longer read in their original languages; nor could he have foreseen, for all his interest in *full* translation, our terrible urgency for complete translation. His age, after all, could afford such sports of translation as Newman's *Iliad*, and perhaps we can too, but we cannot afford *not* to have something better.

It is almost certain that the classics cannot, in translation, live anything like their old independent life. Our particular urgency is to see that they live as well as they possibly can within their new language; that they give us as much of themselves as they can, and as authoritatively as possible. I do not mean that we must have definitive translations, but that our translations should have as much of the original as possible, and hence the authority of the

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original. The classics-in-translation must, that is, remain classics, for they are now almost all the classics we have.

Despite the achievement of recent years, we have, in fact, very few of the classics in anything like adequate translation. Almost nothing of Greek lyric poetry; no Hesiod; the available Aristophanes reads like vulgarized Gilbert & Sullivan; I know of no worthwhile translation of the minor plays of Aeschylus or Sophocles; much of Euripides, including several of his masterpieces, is *terra incognita* for the man with no Greek; we are badly in need of a new Plato and a new Herodotus . . . and so on, through Ovid, much of Cicero, the bulk of Silver Latin poetry, the major works of Tacitus and Seneca—all are deficient. You look in vain for a readable Apollonius; Theocritus has had careful scholarship but no translators worthy of the name; the majority of minor achievements, like Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus,* or Rutilius' *On His Return,* or Tibullus, are not to be found in good English, classics in name only.

Homer, with Greek tragedy, Plato, Aristotle and the *Aeneid* are the indispensable classical minimum, but Homer in particular since he was to Greek culture as a whole whatever it is that classical civilization is to our culture as a whole. The two Homeric poems, and particularly the *Iliad,* inform Greek culture as the Bible used to inform our own, and if we are interested in the continuity and quality of our culture, we will be interested in Homer with even more urgency than Arnold was.

Arnold on translating Homer bears re-reading; if much of what he said now seems obvious, it is the measure of his good sense that he triumphed over Newman and the prevailing current of classical studies. Thanks to Arnold, we no longer have to trouble ourselves with Homer the balladist, or with quaint Homer, or Homer "popular and garrulous". Yet Arnold's four criteria, for all their application to Pope and Chapman and Newman, were not adequate for Homer, and his own translations had more of Vergil's *lacrimae rerum* than Homer's strength. But balancing Arnold with Newman—who was right as often as he was wrong—it is possible to revise Arnold's criteria more closely to the Homer whose Greek Newman knew well and whose literary greatness Arnold understood. "Homer is", says Arnold, "eminently rapid; he is eminently plain and direct, both in the evolution of his thought and in the expression of it . . . and finally he is eminently noble." By "eminently rapid", Arnold meant "unlike Cowper"; by "eminently plain and direct", "unlike Pope"; by "eminently noble", "unlike Newman". While these negative judgements are correct, Arnold's principles taken positively have not been adequate for the reason that Arnold had his eye more upon the translator's English than upon Homer's Greek. This would not be worth mention were it not that Arnold's criteria have assumed too great authority among translators. We are today flooded with translation which, in the name of "rapidity" and "directness and plainness"

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sacrifice the poem to the story, or ruthlessly excise epithet and detail as otiose. Or, again, translators hanker after "nobility" and import from the Bible, Shakespeare, and Swinburne a diction and syntax which in their new context are more tinsel than noble. Still other translations have been intended to implement special theories, often ungrounded in Greek—Lawrence with his "Wardour-Street" Homer, or Butler chasing Nausicaa.

For this Arnold is not responsible, but it is true that translators who were not classicists have frequently been misled by his criteria. The *Iliad is* rapid, it has a genuine momentum, but at the same time it is leisurely and expansive. The hexameter moves rapidly from line to line, but with a motion that is often random and discursive, as though a man should move steadily West but to nowhere West in particular. The hexameter is not so rapid as not to linger over detail; at times the detail, the epithets, the hardened phrases from a previous balladry, appear as the condition of a line's rapidity, a poetry not for the internal ear, but for the ear of men who listen to a reciting voice. A translation which sacrifices detail to rapidity misses the whole tension of the poem's movement. Plain and direct? Plainer then Pope, but why plainness at all? Rather, a lucidity so effortless that generations of scholars mistook the controlled simplicity for naïveté. A poem which is not highly periodic (as the *Iliad* sometimes is) is not therefore "direct"; rather, what we have is the flexibility of a very highly evolved literary language grounded in common speech. The texture is more dense than it looks, but it is not the kind of density—multiple levels, ambiguity, conceit—which will reward the application of modern critical methods (so much the worse for them). To get into the *Iliad* requires, as the very minimum, not probing from the surface, but to read the poem as a whole, *aloud*, with aural comprehension. A crude minimum perhaps, but one which suggests that the poem's success is largely due to the relationship between meter and meaning, therefore an achievement which is not readily grasped by our overly semantic criticism, and one which explains the terrible difficulty of translating the *Iliad* well. Finally, "nobility": from the start this was too vague a criterion to be of any practical help to translators; at least, it is difficult to see just how a translator should strive for "nobility" as he might strive for "rapidity" or "directness". Arnold's personal conviction that a Biblical Concordance was a good guide to the "nobility" of a possible diction has been fruitful of much confusion. But in general, Arnold failed precisely where he wanted most to succeed—in offering close practical advice to the translator of Homer; what he did, as against Newman, was to remind the translator of his necessary loyalty to two languages at the same time.

The danger to the independent life of the classics came, in Arnold's time, from the classicist with his overwhelmingly literal loyalty to Greek and Latin and his genuine inexperience with the English language. In our time, we have had more to fear from the translator who is committed to the other direction,

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though both loyalties remain common. The *Iliad* of W. H. D. Rouse is, for instance, the work of a classicist whose allegiance is almost entirely directed to the English language, an allegiance which he shares with E. V. Rieu, the translator of the Penguin *Iliad*. If two translations so different from each other can be met with a single criticism, it would be that both translations are partial, that they succeed in losing whatever it is that makes the *Iliad* a classic.

Rouse is explicit in his intention: "a translation into plain English of the plain story of Homer, omitting the embellishments which were meant only to please the ear—stock epithets and recurring phrases where the meaning is of no account." In other words, a "plain" translation of "plain Homer"; the preconception is so radically wrong that the translation could not but fail, however much it may have discovered what was omitted by other translators. Applied to the *Odyssey*, this intention made a delightful translation, a version more full of life and humor than any other Odyssey I know. Rouse exactly caught the spirit of Eumaeus and Eurycleia, the paranomasia, the true Odysseus, the fun at Phaeacia. But because of the differences of the two Homeric poems, his *Iliad*, similarly conceived, is the grossest violation of tone. Not only are the Homeric heroes vulgarized, but they talk a kind of English which flatly parodies Homer. In the final scene of the *Iliad*, just after Achilles has released Hector's body to Priam, he calls upon the dead Patroclus:

> Don't be cross with me, Patroclus, if you hear even in Hades that I have given Hector back to his father. . . .

Hector taunts Diomedes in the language of West-End melodrama:

> Tydeides! You have always had the honours of the feast—a front seat and lots of meat; some one to fill up your cup! But no more honours for you now. After all, you're no better than a woman. Get out, you base puppet! I will never give way and let you scale our walls or carry off our women! Before that, I will deal you destiny!

Paris to Hector:

> Well, your worship, you see what a drag I am on you when you are in a hurry; I'm late, and I did not come along fair and square as you told me!

One shudders to think what Arnold would have thought of his criterion of "plainness" carried to this conclusion. But Rouse's failure is the more disappointing when one realizes the liveliness of his response to the Greek and his frequent success in rendering it into a lively English. Moreover, the Rouse *Odyssey* shows how clearly his failure with the *Iliad* is not so much a matter of poor English as a terrible restriction in his total view of Homer. The Homer that emerges from this translation is a punning, wandering, folksy storyteller; there is nothing here of the epic poet, and in fact, almost nothing of the central theme of the *Iliad;* Achilles has no tragedy because the language in which his terrible pride is here put precludes it from being terrible, and hence precludes

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the great catharsis of his recovery. So insistent is Rouse that we should see the story for what it is, that he will not let us see the meaning of the story.

Consider his ruthless excision of detail, those "epithets and recurring phrases where the meaning is of no account." I would agree that in five cases out of seven, tags like δῖος and δαΐφρων have nothing but a metrical function, and clearly reflect the balladlike material that Homer used. But the Separatist controversy should have shown clearly the danger of assuming that Homer is consistent; he was working with a stubborn mass of earlier material, some of which he could fit to his purpose, some not. There is no one function for the gods in the *Iliad*, for instance; the gods seem now to be purely mechanical devices for forwarding the plot, now to be extended psychological metaphors, and often simply to people an Olympos which exists for contrast with the hell of men on earth. Similarly, I would suppose, with the epithets; no poet could be so callous about language as Homer is currently supposed to have been with these epithets. Pandaros, for instance, just before his treacherous violation of the truce is significantly, I think, called "godlike" (ἀντίθεος), next "blameless" (ἀμύμων), and finally "wise" (δαΐφρων). In Bk. XVI, we get this passage:

> No man, not even a knowing one, would still have recognized the godlike (δῖος) Sarpedon, piled from head to foot under a mass of spears, blood and dirt.

There are any number of similar passages where Homer seems to give something with the epithet but to take away with its context. No passage makes the intent of these inversions more clear, I think, than this, at the end of the twentieth book:

> Before great-hearted Achilles the single-hoofed horses trampled on dead men and shields, and the axle under the chariot was splashed with blood, and the rails around the rim were splashed with drops that flew up from the wheels and the horses' hooves. The son of Peleus was straining to win glory, and his invincible hands were stained with bloody filth.

The juxtaposition of glory with filth is intended to put a stain upon the glory which has been won. Achilles pursues his own honor to the point where he stains the very honor he seeks. This kind of tension between the code and the actual conduct of the heroes is so common that Simone Weil was led directly to the conclusion that the *Iliad* is in fact an anti-war poem, and its true hero is Force. This view I think fundamentally false, since it works without making any concession to the strength of the heroic convention. There can be no doubt that Homer regards war, and this particular war, as a tragedy, but his subject is not war, nor even men-at-war. The central concern of the *Iliad* is with men and their honor, and war is the recognized field for honor. We have an honor-ridden society and individuals like Achilles, for whom life without honor is not worth having (consider in this light the real meaning of Achilles'

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"double fate" in Book IX). The horror beneath Achilles' tragedy is that his pursuit of honor leads him directly to the practice of the greatest dishonor: to the destruction of his best friend, to the violation of a suppliant's rights, to the mutilation of a dead body, to being as pitiless "as the sea". The tragedy works according to the principle that a virtue in excess will produce its characteristic vice, and this principle is extended from Achilles to cover most of the Greek host. At every point the key-word is honor and dishonor. Achilles says:

> We have won great glory; we have slain godlike Hector to whom the Trojans prayed as to a god.

And the very next phrase comes pat to that "glory":

> He spoke and devised dishonorable treatment for godlike Hector. He pierced the tendons of both feet from heel to ankle. . . .

How far Achilles has fallen we know from none other than Andromache:

> I have no father nor queenly mother; godlike Achilles killed my father . . . he slew Eetion, but did not despoil him of his arms. . . . Rather, he burned him in his well-wrought armor and raised a mound over him. . . .

Not to despoil your enemy of his arms is a charity beyond the convention of war. And it is Eetion who is mentioned once again, as though to recall this charity, in the story of Lycaon, at the moment of Achilles' greatest wrath, just before Achilles kills his boy-suppliant and tosses him into the river. To juxtapose chivalry and honor with the actual dishonor incurred in the pursuit of honor: this is a part of the artistic effect of an epithet in its context. To omit it is to omit a part of the meaning; it also amounts to admitting that Homer had, much of the time, a tin ear.

E. V. Rieu's translation is more complete than Rouse's and in general more useful. Its virtues are rapidity, clarity and accuracy; like Rouse it sacrifices some of the detail to movement, but Rieu is not so ruthless as Rouse. The prose is rigorously prosaic, and the movement, despite its speed, is excessively choppy. Rieu prefers a simple syntax, perhaps in an effort to avoid the poetic prose of most translations; he consistently avoids archaism and goes too far to the opposite extreme. He is frequently colloquial, and often vulgar; but his worst offense is that he renders the poetic idiom of the *Iliad* by downright cliché. "Winged words" in Rieu becomes "plainly", or "to the point"; "he cried a terrible cry" becomes "he shouted at the top of his lungs"; "we have quarrelled together" becomes "we have been at daggers drawn"; elsewhere, there are hundreds of phrases on the order of "in the thick of the fray", "unleash the dogs of war", "small-talk", "we could sling plenty of insults", etc. My point is not that colloquialisms are out of place in Homer, but that the colloquialisms dear to Rieu are normally quite dead; that Rieu consistently either cheapens Homer or takes off his bloom. "Achilles gave a cry of anger and surprise. 'Marvels will never cease!' he said to himself". He might equally

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well have said: "Well, I'll be . . !" If Homer is to be translated into English prose, that prose has a responsibility to be fresh, not journalistic paraphrase.

I could have wished that it had been the Chase-Perry *Iliad*, rather than the Rieu or Rouse versions, which had been published in a cheap pocket edition. This is a fine, spirited and accurate translation, written in a rapid, lucid prose with a marked cadence. For those who want the full *Iliad*—all but the full poetry—this translation should do. The English, like the Greek, is fresh, leisurely-rapid, flowing and without any sign of that Anglicized Greek syntax so common in translation. Far from avoiding prose with the flavor of poetry, Chase and Perry have deliberately sought it, out of the conviction, I suppose, that any accurate translation of Homer into prose must bear the marks of its poetic original. I believe they have chosen wisely, and that the present disrepute of poetic prose has blinded us to its very real use; why should prose not have the cadence of poetry, if it does so to some advantage? The distinction between prose and poetry is not, I suspect, a fruitful one, except in terms of intention and purpose, and clearly not in terms of formal category or logical structure. For this reason an *Iliad* in poetry is likely to come closer to success than an *Iliad* in prose, granting excellence of both poetry and prose; but it will also follow that an *Iliad* which is substantially poetic prose will come closer than a prose *Iliad* to representing Homer's complete intent. If we had only this translation alone, it would be possible for us to keep the *Iliad*, however diminished, as a classic in the English language.

But we have to admit that if prose translations of the *Iliad* have not been generally successful, neither have most poetic translations. Chapman, diffuse and fanciful; Cowper, Miltonic; Pope, "charming, but you must not call it Homer"; Newman, ignoble; Bryant, uninteresting; what chance of bettering these?

Apart from our total view of Homer, our full conception of his intent, the most drastic difficulty in the way of poetic translation is meter, a difficulty more drastic for Homer than for Greek tragedy or Vergil or any other classic poet, except perhaps Pindar. Not one poetic translation in the past has found any meter really analogous to the dactylic hexameter in intent and effect. It will not fall naturally within the scope of English pentameter, for you have to choose between excision or endless use of the prosaic run-on, alternatives which will make no translator happy. Nor, as Arnold recognized, do we have any recognizable English hexameter with which to begin, and clearly one of the conditions of an effective translation would be that of working within a known meter and a predictable response from the hearer. Result: impasse and the intolerable condition that the translator should not only translate accurately but should also have to create his own meter. Attempts to import the dactylic hexameter outright into English verse were doomed from the start.

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How doomed they were one can see even in the first five lines of the Smith-Miller translation:

> *Sing, O Goddess, the wrath of Achilles, scion of Peleus,*
> *Ruinous wrath, that afflicted with numberless woes the Achaeans,*
> *Hurling headlong to Hades souls many and brave ones—of heroes*
> *Slain, aye, gave unto dogs, unto all birds lonelily flying*
> Them *as a prey; and the counsel of Zeus moved aye to fulfillment.*

What is interesting is not so much the curious diction, but the extent to which the exigencies of the meter has demanded that the diction be curious; that birds should fly "lonelily" is not only appalling but is also gratuitous. It was good perhaps that the experiment was made but the waste of genuine devotion is the more terrible because it could have been predicted.

This problem of meter has gone a good step toward solution in Richmond Lattimore's new translation. But before discussing that, I should like to put it down firmly at the outset that this translation is to my mind the finest translation of Homer ever made into the English language. It could be improved only by Lattimore's revision of his work, a revision which I very much hope he will have the opportunity to make. For the meantime, it is quite enough that we should have an *Iliad* which again and again gives one the feeling of the Greek on the page, which, when it reads itself, is a creation as exciting as we can hope for in a translation and which allows us to have the *Iliad* as a classic in the English language.

Lattimore, as both poet and classicist, comes naturally to the double loyalty any good translator must have. He has none of the foibles about archaism, or balladry or slang which have ruined so many translations; his total view of Homer is unrestricted by anything except the poem itself. Moreover, he lacks the common *hybris* of the poet, his temptation to improve upon the original by slightly changing the meaning or charging a word which is neutral in the Greek; there is equally no sign of the pedant-translator. *This* is the motion one misses in the other translations:

> *As when in their thickness the snowflakes of Zeus come fluttering*
> *cold beneath the blast of the north wind born in the bright sky,*
> *so now in their thickness the pride of the helms bright shining*
> *were carried out from the ships, and shields massive in the middle*
> *and the corselets strongly hollowed and the ash spears were worn forth.*
> *The shining swept to the sky and all earth was laughing about them*
> *under the glitter of bronze and beneath their feet stirred the thunder*
> *of men, within whose midst brilliant Achilles helmed him.*

Compare it with the good Chase-Perry prose, and there is no choice between them:

> As when from Zeus snowflakes fall thick and fast, bitterly cold beneath the blast of ether-born Boreas, so thickly then the brightly gleaming

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> helmets and bossed shields and strong breastplates and ashen spears poured from the ships. The brightness rose to heaven and all the earth laughed round about beneath the gleam of bronze. A din arose from the warriors' feet, and in their midst godlike Achilles armed himself.

Lattimore's meter is a free six-beat line "to be read with its natural stress, not forced into any system." His reasons for adopting such a line should be clear: to get the Greek accurately into the line, to avoid the padding and excision which normally accompany the use of a domesticated English meter, and to ensure variation. It is not a question whether Lattimore was correct in choosing a meter (if that is the word for it) which has no precedent in English tradition; he had, I think, no effective choice, given what he intended, and the restrictions of English metrics. If this is so, his accomplishment can be judged only by his success in creating an English Homer, *and* his success in creating a line which will read itself as poetry. The dangers of his line are as clear as its advantages: it is not always easy to find a natural stress in a line of this length, and unless great attention is paid to the caesura which a line of such length should entail at its close, it is difficult for the succeeding verse to get off to a natural start. On the whole, Lattimore is far more successful than I would have thought possible; the passage already quoted should show effectively how promising the meter and the solution are. But it is also true that the meter will need more experiment before it attains to anything like the flexibility of the Homeric hexameter. Like most previous translators, Lattimore has succeeded best where he was translating the most "poetic" material, especially the similes; the catalogues of names, the "business" part of the poem, are less effective, as they must be. But there is a jar which I do not find in the original, when Lattimore goes from a simile to a straightforward passage, the difference being that Lattimore's "business" passages read less easily than the similes, and are, in fact, often indistinguishable from prose. For instance, the first twenty lines of Bk. XX read more nearly as poetry in the Chase-Perry version than they do in Lattimore's:

> *But his deadly fate held Hector shackled, so that he stood fast*
> *in front of Ilion and the Skaian gates. Now Phoibos*
> *Apollo spoke aloud to Peleion: "Why, son of Peleus,*
> *do you keep after me in the speed of your feet, being mortal*
> *while I am an immortal god? Even yet you have not*
> *seen that I am a god, but strain after me in your fury.*

Here the commonest reason for the failure of the lines to read themselves as poetry is in Lattimore's management of the end of the lines. Within six lines, he has managed to have two disastrous run-ons, run-ons which are thoroughly effective in destroying any regularity of motion, since they ignore the caesura and trouble the succeeding line. One wants to read "Phoibos//Apollo" and "not//seen" and there is no criterion which might decide

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the issue since we are ignorant of any rules which apply to this meter. The consequence of having a line whose natural stress is in question is to break your movement, and the movement is at the heart of Homeric technique. Nor does Lattimore have any sanction for this kind of run-on; while it is true that Homer enjambs very frequently, he almost never has a run-on which separates members of a syntactical unit: adjective and noun, negative and verb. My point is that it is precisely details of this sort which Lattimore's free line should enable him to avoid, and which he must avoid if he is to succeed. One often finds three to four such run-ons per page; at times his treatment of the line-end appears purely arbitrary:

I will give him seven women of Lesbos, the work of whose hands is/
blameless. . . .

is later repeated as:

He will give you seven women of Lesbos, the work of whose hands/
is blameless. . . .

and finally as:

immediately the seven women the work of whose hands was/
blameless. . . .

One of the most magnificent moments of the poem comes, not to grief, but not to felicity either, on a similar disregard for caesura:

As when in the sky the stars about the moon's shining
are seen in all their glory, when the air has fallen to stillness,
and all the high places of the hills are clear, and the shoulders
out-jutting,
and the deep ravines, as endless bright air spills from the heavens
and all the stars are seen, to make glad the heart of the shepherd;
such in their numbers blazed the watchfires the Trojans were burning
between the waters of Xanthos and the ships, before Ilion.
A thousand fires were burning there in the plain, and beside each
one sat fifty men in the flare of the blazing firelight.

That "each//one" is so unnecessary that I think Lattimore must in fact be unaware of what he does to his caesurae. His preference for the feminine ending and a habit of ending—rather weakly—with a preposition plus a pronoun support the suspicion. Given a free line, this sort of thing could have been avoided:

. . . . mixed them a potion
with Pramneian wine, and grated goat's-milk cheese into it
with a bronze grater, and scattered with her hand white barley into it.

Some sort of padding will inevitably have to float a translation, no matter how free its meter, especially when it attempts a line-for-line correspondence. It should be said that Lattimore almost never pads in the grand manner: "delicate spoils" in line 4 of Bk. I is an exception. More generally, he floats his

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line out with prepositional phrases (*to him, into it, with him, over it,* etc.), a habit which tends to slow his lines to some degree; on p. 393, for instance, I find six of these phrases in the space of 10 lines, two of them concluding the lines.

These are perhaps the piddling counsels of perfection, but we want the fullest Homer we can get, and it is this translation which can give it to us. Against these criticisms, one can more than balance the achievement: a line-for-line translation in a meter which often gives the feel of reading the Greek; an absolute fidelity to the original, in both spirit and letter; a diction which is almost without exception true and proper and whose effect, in conjunction with meter, is what Arnold could have called "noble"; a superb freshness in a genuine English; success in conveying the special effects of the particles, the effect of the significant Homeric run-on, and the sweep of the Greek. The introduction to the translation is a superb essay on Homer. If we can have more translations like this (and the hope of its own self-improvement) I, for one, have no fear for the continued life of the classics in their new ground.

ROBERT HALSBAND

Boswell and his Masquerade[1]

BOSWELL WAS A LITERARY MACHINE with two main gears. One, which gave him the power, was his mania for setting down in words every mood, fancy, and thought, every person and experience, every impulse and inhibition—ranging from the metaphysical to (in the Johnsonian pun) the fundamental. His *cacoethes scribendi* supplied the endless energy that drove him to write in the midst of deepest melancholy or highest joy, as though his emotion, personality, his existence itself achieved a reality through being set down in black on white. This trait alone explains why he left bales of manuscript; it does not, however, explain our interest in his writing as literature: that comes from his craftsmanship. Not, we must remind ourselves, in the jottings, memoranda, accounts, lists, directions, and all the other bits of paper that ordinary people doodle and then destroy. But whenever he composed something—a letter, essay, especially a journal—he could not help giving it the vibration of his own vitality.

The feature which makes his journals so dramatic is his candor and clarity in setting down every vagrant idea and action, no matter how trivial, absurd

[1]BOSWELL IN HOLLAND 1763-1764, edited by *Frederick A. Pottle.* McGraw-Hill Company. $6.00. THE JOURNAL OF A TOUR TO CORSICA; AND MEMOIRS OF PASCAL PAOLI, by *James Boswell.* Edited by *Morchard Bishop.* Macmillan. $2.00.

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or shameful. His inner censor had a full-time job, and he reveals its constant bickering. The drama that develops, then, is one between the personalities he wanted to become (in all shades of the human spectrum) and the chameleon personality he was. Much of the time he is like a vain man at the costumer's fitting himself for an endless masquerade, and posturing madly before a mirror to see what he sees. "I am weak and fickle, and am of different minds in the same day," he wrote to a friend when he first went to Holland. And so there is the constant shifting, fidgeting, navel-picking, agitation, mutability—the flux, in short, which comes closest to the feel of a living mind and sensibility.

His *London Journal* of 1762-1763 shows this with a monumentally simple design. The personality he wished most consistently to assume alternated between two poles—the man of morality and the man of pleasure. And beautifully illustrating these, the two main narrative threads are his pursuit of Johnson, the Great Moralist, and of Louisa, the genteel actress who allowed him a winter's "safe copulation" and rewarded him with the clap. There is much else in the London journal, fuzzy background for these two main movements of character and of plot. The immense readability is no accident; it is the product of Boswell's craftsmanship, for he consciously and deliberately manipulated his daily memoranda and jottings (one almost says droppings) into shapely segments of two weeks. Although he wrote the journal primarily for himself, he sent it to an intimate friend in Edinburgh. His passion for introspection and self-revelation, we may assume, took the form of writing to enable him to seize his own existence in reality; a spectator, then, other than himself would give that reality even greater objectivity. He was reassured if someone else peeked over the shoulder of his *alter ego*.

What would happen if he wrote a journal not for himself or an intimate friend but for publication? The *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* was that, and a full dress affair; his earlier Corsican journal, which is now reprinted (and excellently edited) allows us to guess the answer on a more modest scale. He had gone to that island after his tour through Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy; and he was charmed by its rugged simplicity and its heroic General Paoli, leader of the unsuccessful liberation movement. To celebrate his enthusiasm he published, in 1768, an *Account of Corsica*—a formal, reliable, and derivatory history of the island—and along with it, the journal and the memoir of Paoli. The occasional similarities between the (public) Corsican journal and the (private) London one are startling. In Corsica, when he rides out on Paoli's horse with an escort of guards, "I allowed myself to indulge a momentary pride in this parade, as I was curious to experience what could really be the pleasure of state and distinction with which mankind are so strangely intoxicated." At another time, he admits how agreeable it is to enjoy "a sort of luxury of noble sentiments." Unabashed at exhibiting these emotions (so enjoyable to many other manly hearts of the century, Tom Jones's among

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them), he is equally free with his other moods: "With a mind naturally inclined to melancholy, and a keen desire of inquiry, I had intensely applied myself to metaphysical researches, and reasoned beyond my depth, on such subjects as it is not given to man to know." (The priggish tone is typical.)

At the end of the preface to the Corsican journal he writes a short paragraph which provides us with the bridge to connect his private and his public writings. "He who publishes a book, affecting not to be an authour, and professing an indifference for literary fame, may possibly impose upon many people such an idea of his consequences as he wishes may be received. For my part, I should be proud to be known as an authour; and I have an ardent ambition for literary fame; for of all possessions I should imagine literary fame to be the most valuable." Then he explains his reasons: he can achieve a respectable character and preserve a uniform dignity (in spite of everyday weaknesses); and he will be consoled by knowing that he is giving pleasure to others and that he "may cherish the hope of being remembered after death, which has been a great object to the noblest minds in all ages." The same hammer with which he nailed himself into the context of reality in this world would, he thought, fix him into place in the void of infinity.

With *Boswell in Holland* we have the second volume of the much publicized edition of the Boswell papers; and its substance, like its interest, is somewhat different from the first. When the young Scotsman embarked at Harwich—his last sight, as he wrote in the *Life,* was Johnson "rolling his majestic frame in his usual manner"—he was on his way to Utrecht to study law. For ten months he stayed in Holland, scribbling continually of course, studying, arguing, traveling, elegantly going about in society, and tumbling through a succession of moods, from blackest melancholy at the beginning ("I went out to the streets, and even in public could not refrain from groaning and weeping bitterly. I said always, 'Poor Boswell! is it come to this? Miserable wretch that I am! What shall I do?' ") to the highest elation because he was going to accompany Lord Marischal to the court at Berlin ("Such a change as I now feel makes me more and more convinced of immortality, for I see how a man can be quite extinguished and yet can revive"). Naturally some of the motifs from the London journal continue: he still nags himself to be *retenu,* he administers doses of work to cure his melancholy. (One thinks of how Gide, in his journals, spoons out his time in hourly tasks.) Although he still orders himself to be like Johnson, a new model appears briefly; his friend Temple at Cambridge has met Gray the poet, and not only does Boswell put in a request for an introduction on his return to England; in a memorandum he orders himself: "Be Gray." His masquerade continues.

But the differences between this and the London journal are more striking. There is none of the fantastic whoring; he occasionally thinks of it, to be sure, once going so far as to visit a brothel in Amsterdam; and although he enjoys

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the ludicrous session of talking Dutch to the girl, "I had no armour, so did not fight." Instead of London's casual fornication, he now has gallant flirtations with ladies of station high enough to be marital possibilities: first with a rich widow, whom he calls *la Veuve,* and then more seriously with Belle de Zuylen, whose pen name was Zélide. For he is succeeding, to some extent, in being a man of the world. Like every traveler he had the advantage here of an extra measure of tolerance because he was a foreigner. But the most important quality of the volume is one which affects it as literature, and which has a strong bearing on the publication of the Boswell papers as a whole. The actual journal which he wrote for the first nine months of his stay in Holland was lost during his own lifetime, and so the editors have arranged in chronological sequence as much of the primary, intimate records as they have—some of it the raw substance which Boswell used as notes for his journal—and a selection of letters he wrote and received during this period. The intimate records include daily memoranda and notes in which he admonished himself for his previous day's mistakes and advised himself on the current day's conduct; dialogues in dramatic form; themes in French and fewer in Dutch, on any subject since his sole purpose was to acquire skill in the languages; daily exercises of ten lines of verse couplets, again on any subject. The verse, usually the merest doggerel, is often quaint; in the first one he explains his purpose:

> *Ten lines a day I task myself to write,*
> *Be fancy clouded or be fancy bright. . . .*
> *And sure by practice I may freely hope*
> *To turn a line like Dryden or like Pope.*

To all these the editors add supplementary data from his register of letters, expenses, and accounts of winnings and losses at cards. His laundry lists do not, apparently, survive.

In spite of expert editing, most of the volume simply does not make interesting reading. The monotony of the memoranda, set down with stenographic brevity, gradually erodes the reader's attention. Here is a typical example:

> TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY. Yesterday you began your new course of *retenue* to accustom yourself to constant useful conversation, with mild and grave dignity, and only to relax at times to merriment. This character it is not difficult to form. Only lay restraint for a little at first. You see it is not observed when you do it. . . . This day *rouse.* Cold is better; indulge it no more, lest you hurt nerves and fall into old-womanish complaining. Fix hours better and labour harder. Make the most of Brown: Dutch and geography. But above all, *think,* and get manly ideas. You will be pretty gentleman. Write Madame Geelvinck. If you are always employed, you can never fall back to idle vanity as with Eglinton.

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The dialogues are stiff, without the flexibility and humor they would have had in the journal. And most of the verse and themes are interesting only as curiosities. No doubt these various snippets have a fascination for the scholarly; they are the factual basis for reconstructing Boswell's life during this period. But by themselves they do not add up to a book.

The letters, however, by Boswell and his friends are full of ideas, and bristle with dramatic tension. His friend Dempster's letters, for example, are tremendously lively and energetic. His scepticism is a foil for Boswell's strained morality. "Enthusiasm is madness, superstition folly, and faith a farce", he writes in a letter, cleverly teasing his friend's uneasy faith. The editors have also very wisely added an appendix of the letters exchanged by Boswell and Belle de Zuylen, which began a few days before he left Utrecht and continued to 1768. She was a fiercely honest and brilliant woman—and brilliantly characterized some years ago by Geoffrey Scott in his *Portrait of Zélide*. With her scalpel intellect she went to work on Boswell. Answering his long letter (haranguing her with didactic platitudes) which ended with "Heaven bless you and make you rationally happy", she pretended to be shocked to find in him "the puerile vanity of a fatuous fool, coupled with the arrogant rigidity of an old Cato". The aftermath was ironic for her: she tried to be rationally happy, and through that method succeeded in failing.

The letters are so refreshing they point up the desiccated bulk of the book. One of Boswell's memoranda states: "You wrote a long splenetic letter to Temple. You tore it; you did well. Write him a neat manly one, and talk of your gloom as past." The editors footnote the passage as an "indication of the fact that in the memoranda we have a truer picture of the actual state of Boswell's spirits than in his journal or letters." This seems to show a confusion as to the literary value of the whole Boswell paper hoard: do we appreciate the papers for their truthfulness (even assuming that this particular kind of alteration is frequent) or for their artfulness? The clinical documentation of Boswell is hardly interesting compared to his own transformations of it into a human document. In this distinction lies the difference between basket-emptying antiquarianism and literature.

Still, in presenting these materials here the editors have made the best of an unfortunate lacuna in the series of journals. The next volume of the papers will not suffer that disadvantage.

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SIDNEY MONAS

Dry-Goods and a Ghost[1]

THE SPENDTHRIFTS, BY PEREZ GALDOS, a nineteenth century work recently translated, is a chronicle of deluded parasites burrowing in the last warmth of a dying body-politic. It is a political novel, a study in political bankruptcy, although the ostensible material for the plot is, simply, and to an almost incredible extent, the purchase and wear of women's clothes. A stupidity-in-the-soul of each and every character makes for fidgety reading throughout, in spite of the fine precision of the writing. Even Gogol, epic poet of bureaucracy and the vacuum, provided release from the meanness of the life depicted by means of a dazzling verbal wit, a fireworks of hyperbole. *The Spendthrifts* is unrelieved, deadpan.

Beginning with the description of a sepulchre, vulgar-romantic, the dregs of an age of sentiment already over—willow trees, a motley-styled statue of a sweetish male angel, and names carved on the marble tomb, whose letters melt into tear-drops—one is prepared to be mildly amused at extravagance and bad taste. One finds, however, that the sepulchre is not a sepulchre, but a carefully wrought painting; and not really a painting, but a hair-portrait. The "artist" is not an artist, but a prominent figure at court, a civil servant who does nothing in his work-days but adjust these fine bits of hair under glass until he goes blind. The picture is to go as a sentimental token to the man who secured the hair-compositor his sinecure; not out of gratitude, but to avoid a gift that costs money. And while the hair-compositor misers it over his false-bottom strong-box and squints away at his masterwork, his half-cowed, half-rebellious wife goes squandering off into debt (and a passion-less adultery, by means of which she hopes to raise money) in an accelerated orgy of clothes-buying. She must appear worthy in public, she rationalises, of descent from Calderon de la Barca!

Galdos has made as much of smallness as he could, without a single character of sensibility or moral intelligence to set it off. Even Refugio, who, by her strightforwardness, "shows up" the fine ladies in a city where ". . . the rich masquerade as poor and the poor as rich"; who does perhaps show a spark of sincerity and certainly a hearty violence of temper, remains too much the "honest whore" for any depth of contrast. Galdos' skill is with tricks of focus

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[1]THE SPENDTHRIFTS, by *Benito Perez Galdos,* transl. *Gamel Woolsey.* Farrar, Straus & Young. $3.50. THE FANCY DRESS PARTY, by *Alberto Moravia,* transl. *Angus Davidson.* Farrar, Straus & Young. $3.00. THE DWARF, by *Pär Lagerkvist,* transl. *Alexandra Dick.* A. A. Wyn (reissue). $3.00. BARABBAS, by *Pär Lagerkvist,* transl. *Alan Blair.* Random House. $2.75. EPITAPH OF A SMALL WINNER, by *Machado De Assis,* transl, with an introd. by *William L. Grossman.* Noonday Press. $3.50,

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and concentration: the tremendous palace, with its lords of kitchen and privy, its throbbing, croo-ing, uncontrollable, dung-spattering mass of pigeons and children; the admiring reverent gossip of sinecure-holders about their spend-thrift, dim-witted queen; endless talk about clothes; vanities of the State which feeds, made manifest in works and days of the drones who are fed. Some speculation of other possibilities, perhaps the moral presence of the author (he appears, off-hand, as a narrative device: "I was here and saw these things"), or the chance visit of a man from another country, or even a more intensely conceived Refugio—just a touch—might have made the difference between a highly skilled chronicle and a major effort in the realm of the novel.

The Fancy Dress Party is also, to a degree, a highly skilled, delicately balanced work. It deals with a dictator, a decayed aristocracy, a secret police, and it was banned under Mussolini (when it was written); but unlike *The Spend-thrifts*, it is not a political novel. *The Spendthrifts* is about people in a commonwealth, and a commonwealth (or, rather, a common-poverty) in people. The only paraphrasable political meaning of *The Fancy Dress Party* is that dictators are people just like anybody else.

The Fancy Dress Party is an opera bouffe, a carnival, a masquerade, a comedy of art with a cast of fools. It is stylised play, in which the plot chooses its human material, rather than vice-versa, and therefore it is apart from the dominant mode of the novel of the last hundred years, and although quite clear and fairly simple, easily misapprehended. It is harlequinry, and the intrigue is almost its own point. "Almost", because the point of intrigue is deception. Deception is a carnival mask; it blocks out the persona, or social mask, and grants to certain deeply felt and perhaps deeply suppressed individual needs the release of social anonymity. So the point may penetrate somewhere after all.

Unlike intrigue in a commonwealth, intrigue in a novel must be finally unravelled, the deception apprehended. Deception observed produces disillusion. At the unmasking one wants to tear off all the masks.

Each of the characters in *The Fancy Dress Party* begins with a social mask. Sebastiano is the fool of love; Tereso, the fool of power; Fausta, of liberty; Saverio, of revolt; and Perro, the police-spy and double agent, of deception itself. Each, as the plot thickens, assumes a disguising carnival half-mask.

As long as the intrigue of graft, seduction, assassination and counter-assassination convolves, the novel breathes a rare stage-life of scheming. The author, who in previously translated novels has shown a tendency to mush, here maintains a cold, balanced jugglery. The cruel, fearless old dictator, Tereso, fuddled in the boudoir; the romantic, improverished Sebastiano, with Fausta melting in his arms and no furniture at all in his house, wondering where he can put her down; Fausta, picking her way past baroque pleasure-houses for a rendezvous with her real lover, the goat-like flunkey Doroteo; Saverio shining shoes in the servants' quarters and preaching revolution—these scenes are

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wonderfully comic, yet gripped with tension, a sense that all illusion will end, and nothing may be left. And nothing is.

Fausta, under her mask of freedom, has subjected herself to the most abject animal-like slavery, and has died not even as a domestic animal, but a meaningless object, a thing; Sebastiano, the illusion of romantic love smashed utterly, is deprived of his last noble gesture by an ugly trollope of a chambermaid; even Perro has had his actor's pride shaken, and by a rank amateur, though of course it is Perro, and still acting, who has the last line; above all, Tereso has been humbled, the man of power and courage, thwarted by death.

But Tereso's moment of frustrated self-awareness is a curious failure. At this moment, all the dictator's masks, social as well as carnival, are thrown off, and one is meant to glimpse the inner man face to face with the unconquerable and the irreducible. The language used, however, is totally inadequate for the burden of the drama, and what comes across is not the sudden view of a naked soul, but only a rather banal reflection to the effect that a dictator's power gets him nowhere at all under the rule of the dark king. The other characters, who do not have to live up to the standards of tragic awareness imposed by such a scene, retain their life—as harlequin, pierrot, or columbine.

In the past decade, two short novels by Pär Lagerkvist have been rendered into English, *The Dwarf* (recently reissued), and *Barabbas*. They are extended parables, novels narrowed down and simplified, streamlined, so to speak, for use as vehicles of moral observation. Of the two, *The Dwarf* is incomparably the more successful. It is a history of an Italian Renaissance Prince—a brave, cultured, imaginative man, but still very close to his condottiere ancestors—and of his Princess, as told by a malevolent and satanic dwarf, who answers a profound need in the souls of both Prince and Princess for the grotesque, the deformed, for a sporadic evil smallness of behavior.

This dwarf has a powerful, warped sensibility, an intense rage against mankind. He belongs, he says, to an older race, wiser, more beautiful; as individuals, he cannot abide other dwarfs, they are buffoons, and he recounts with great satisfaction how he murdered two; but as a kind they are vastly superior to humans. The dwarf himself is sterile, but he knows that by an ancient irretractible relation to his older, more beautiful race, human beings will go on producing their own dwarfs, who are in the genes. For all his rage and monstrous courage, the dwarf is impotent as well as sterile. He can defy the smug and the normal, as in the magnificent scene in which he performs the Black Mass, frightening half out of its wits a human audience which came for the laughs. He can murder other dwarfs, but by himself he is helpless against people. He relies on his Prince and Princess to act for him. Through their acts of violence, treachery, self-hatred, he takes his life, and exults. In the end, the appalled Prince has him chained to the castle wall, but the dwarf

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feels confident that "his Prince" will need him again, and that he is, in fact, part of the very castle to which he is chained.

The Prince and Princess are magnificently drawn, especially the latter. Maestro Bernardo, however, a probing, infinitely curious, master-craftsman, artist, humanist, scholar, scientist, who is meant to represent an aspiration of human behavior opposite from that of the dwarf (though the dwarf is shrewd enough to recognise even in him something dwarf-like and deformed), is a failure. The set speeches enhance the Prince and place him in a time when history was written in terms of set speeches, and they serve also to generalise him, to give him a kind of pan-humanity. Maestro Bernardo, however, is meant to represent the power of the creative imagination, and for him, set speeches are inadequate; his discourse on death and falconry is too stylised. Furthermore, his historical resemblance to Leonardo da Vinci is too obvious and too superficial. It may well be that the dwarf's sensibility, through which Bernardo is viewed, is incapable of understanding the great artist's full nature. The feeling for history which gives so much vitality to the rest of the novel defeats its own purpose here by a too literal application.

Unfortunately, this feeling is almost totally absent from *Barabbas*.

Barabbas is the man whose place Christ took on the cross; the concrete, literal man for whom He died. A thief and a murderer, Barabbas is redeemed to this extent: he longs to believe in the godhead of the figure on the cross, dying where he was meant to die; he is possessed by longing and terror, suffering and anguish, a self-destroying secular passion without enlightenment. Caught in the great web of a myth in the process of formation, he is torn by the spider of partial comprehension. An intelligent and rational man, he envies, but cannot accept the faith and illusions of simpler souls. Unable to make the record of his senses cohere for a decision to believe or disbelieve, he is driven to self-violation, revolution, and death. At his ironic crucifixion, Barabbas gives up his soul to the ambiguous darkness—whether to the darkness he saw over Golgotha (the single miracle he has observed and on which he has tried to sustain faith in God), or to the darkness of chaos and oblivion, we are not told.

The impressive moral roots of the novel deserve better foliage, however. One can hardly tell Jerusalem from Rome, or one century from another. About half-way through the novel, when Barabbas leaves Jerusalem, the narrative collapses, and trying to rise, falls all over itself. Of the lesser characters, only the Fat Woman is completely realised, and although she is marvelous, she does not make up for psychological flatness elsewhere. Barabbas himself, in view of his role as *the* concrete man, remains paradoxically abstract, a cardboard nihilist. The short parabolic sentences bring the subject matter under the enormous shade of the New Testament, where its own burgeoning power does not seem very remarkable.

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Certainly, ennui has been one of the great themes of all the arts since the nineteenth century: Byron's spleen, Baudelaire's *triste misère,* Chekhov's *toská.* It has been an essential background-element in all the great achievements of the novel: chez Bovary and chez Swann, Princess Casamassima and the Ververs' *principe,* Rudin, Vronsky, Stavrogin, etc. For a time it was atypical of the art of the New World, or at least of the Protestant, non-slave-holding part, where activism prevailed, either rosy and smug, or desperate à la Melville. But the soil was there, and in time the flower grew. Two factors were of prime importance: the relation of the educated portion of society to the economic productive base, and, closely connected, the exhaustion of sensibility and sentiment as means of self-assertion. Now, the relation has shifted. We know what ennui is. Henry James has come back to his country. Now, we can read and understand an intensely-felt book (written in 1880, and recently translated as a labor of love by Dr. Grossman, a specialist in transportation economics) by the Brazilian writer Machado De Assis, who writes profoundly of ennui, the sense of life not lived, the desperation of desiring desire.

Epitaph of a Small Winner is ghost-written. Using Sternian improvisations and digressions (which turn out, after all, to be integral and to-the-point), Braz Cubas, an intelligent ghost, a careful reader of *Tristram Shandy* and *Candide,* goes back over his works and days as a man, analysing wittily, and reckoning the sum of his struggles as slightly on the credit side, since he has left no heir exposed to the miseries of existence. One must bear in mind, however, that an heir was what Braz Cubas desperately longed for at one stage of his life, and the cynical remark of his ghost is the measure of a soul's defeat; just as the ghost in the Japanese film, *Rashomon,* who tells an appalling lie from beyond the grave, is himself a measure of corruption.

Voltaire disabused Candide of the fabricated notion that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds by stepped-up exposure to Bulgarian whips and Portuguese earthquakes. Braz Cubas is exposed instead to the ravages of ennui. He comes to Dr. Pangloss late in life. His former schoolfellow, Quincas Borba, has worked out a philosophy called Humanitism, in which everything turns out to be for the good of Humanity, and for a while the old synthetic really consoles Braz Cubas. But Borba goes mad and ennui persists. Humanitism no longer helps, nor does the Braz Cubas plaster (a mixture of fame and vanity), and "the pale flower of melancholy" grows unchecked in the jaded soil.

Braz Cubas' longing for meaningful experience, and the constant decay and breakdown of meaning, are conveyed to the reader by a style that combines the rapid episodic technique of the old picaresque novel with the slower picking-apart of works and days typical of the great Russian and French realists. The quick episode is used to expose Cubas to people whose predicaments resemble his own: the sea-captain, for example, who, with a storm coming up and his

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wife dying of tuberculosis in the cabin, discourses to Braz on the sublime nature of the universe, recites lines from a poem he has written, and when Cubas praises him, forgets wife, death, and the universe to indulge in the pleasure of gratified vanity. A prolonged dissection, on the other hand, cuts out in clear detail the love-affair with Virgilia (the major encounter of Cubas' life), its birth, growth, decline and extinction, meticulously described. Occasionally, the two techniques are combined, as in Cubas' almost-marriage to Eulalia, following a not-quite affair with the beautiful, wistful Eugenia, whom he left after observing that she was lame, hearing the social whisper, "Lame!" in imaginary drawing-rooms. He lets himself be matched with Eulalia by an eager brother-in-law, but she dies. And at her funeral, Cubas hears her father complain of a social slight—so few people have shown up to see his daughter buried! Yet a third element of the style is the Sternian digression—the marvellous chapter on "The Tip of the Nose", for example, at once wittily cynical about people in general, and pathetically revealing of the narrator in particular.

What the complex style communicates to the reader, therefore, is not only the meaning of ennui, but a sense of that which ennui stifles: Machado creates a sense of the experience missed as well as the experience exhausted. The exhaustion is not all, nor the miss. The experience is there, like the grave of Eulalia, a powerful reminder of the possible.

SONYA RUDIKOFF

The Root of the Matter[1]

HENRY JAMES, IN HIS PREFACES, has provided a number of texts for the discussion of art, and a very useful one for considering these two books may be found in the preface to *The Princess Casamassima*, where James speaks of the difficulties he encountered in representing the kinds of life that were comparatively unknown to him. Justifying his ignorance by its artistic effectiveness, by the use to which he put it, he makes a plea for talent as against information: "What it all came back to was, no doubt, something like *this* wisdom —that, if you haven't, for fiction, the root of the matter in you, haven't the sense of life and the penetrating imagination, you are a fool in the very presence of the revealed and assured; but that if you *are* so armed you are not really helpless, not without your resource, even before mysteries abysmal." James' wisdom is, of course, not restricted to fiction, and it is possible to see this

[1]THE GROVES OF ACADEME, by *Mary McCarthy*. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.
ROME AND A VILLA, by *Eleanor Clark*. Doubleday. $4.00.

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relation to the root of the matter as a major problem in imaginative writing of all kinds. It is certainly the problem in Miss McCarthy's novel about a progressive college, and in Miss Clark's portraits of Roman people and places. The representation of real places and of fictional realities are generally assumed to require different talents, and our sense of the difference may prevent us from seeing what really faces the penetrating imagination, whether or not it finds specific expression in fiction. We would be mistaken if we understood the imaginative possession of Rome to be a problem for a narrow historical sense alone, and therefore quite different from Miss McCarthy's representation of a fictional world. For, quite as much as any fiction, Miss Clark's Rome is her personal knowledge of it, and her success depends upon the ability to make sense of what she cannot know directly, respecting only the authority of her perceptions. Miss McCarthy, with an equally intense dedication, relies on her experience of the fact, so that it becomes important to notice the book-jacket of *The Groves of Academe*, with its guarantee of experience, its assurance that Miss McCarthy is well-armed because she has taught at Bard and Sarah Lawrence. Her book could not have been written without this experience, although we feel about *Rome and a Villa* that, despite its personal nature, the guarantee might be gratuitous.

When Henry Mulcahy, an instructor in literature, is made to accuse himself falsely of a Communist past so that the "liberal" college president is forced to keep him on his problem, which should be so interesting, really fails to interest us, because Miss McCarthy has provided no world in which her characters may exist; and there are no characters of sufficient force or interest except for Mulcahy. It is difficult to be sure that Miss McCarthy wanted to write a novel—so often are aesthetic problems solved by the techniques of high-class journalism, the fiction forsaken for the "exposé". Certainly, the ideas of our progressive colleges, and of progressive education itself, require our attentive scrutiny, especially where they relate to political ideas; but Miss McCarthy's experience, which sharpens her sense of urgency, might have been used more profitably in an essay, or in a book like Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas*. For, in *The Groves of Academe*, facts and experience are an intrusion, always preventing development, destroying support when the characters need it most. There are many details, but they are the details of fact and not of fiction, and for the world of the novel they are invariably false details. Thus, the coherence of "plot", the understanding of motive, and the relations between characters depend upon a system of tenure and professorial rank; but such a system nullifies the progressive college we are asked to believe in, whether or not such a system does in fact obtain at Bard or Sarah Lawrence, or at Miss McCarthy's own school, Vassar. The frequent use of *ficelles*—all except Mulcahy have this employment—and of Miss McCarthy's specialty, the satiric cadenza, is never dissimulated, so that the falseness of detail becomes a source of major failure

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rather than merely a minor negligence. A student tutorial in American naturalism given by Mulcahy, the Joyce expert; the student dances, so middle-western; the use of textbooks, of grading systems; the faculty articles in magazines like *Prairie Schooner;* the inadequacy of the ideas, even for this invented and satirized college—such details indicate a sense for fact indulged at the expense of the reality of fiction.

Miss McCarthy seems unable to *assume* the existence of this college; she forces the comparison with "real" places like Bennington, Sarah Lawrence, or Black Mountain, and in such company her invention is always counterfeit. Her solution is to insist that the reality of detail insures the reality of the fiction, and she goes on to tell more, to tell everything. She gives an ideological history of the college, outlines its educational practice, provides each character with a dossier—but the more she tells, the less life there is. She makes her characters say too much, exhibit too many tags: the "liberal" president is made to express this sentiment: ". . . the kids say [Mulcahy] wouldn't teach the authors they were interested in, Hemingway, Farrell, Steinbeck, Mailer, you know what I mean, the red-blooded American authors . . . that kids today want to hear about." The *ficelles,* whom we can't see for the strings, are made to represent too much; and, although everyone is always reminding everyone else of classes, meetings, appointments, we have no sense of these activities, and the meetings are over before they start. And there are no real students in the book, they are not even felt by their absence. Had Miss McCarthy been content with saying less, had she not made a try for a major theme, her failure of imagination would be less striking.

For, it is an impoverished life in *these* academic groves, where no one searches for truth, and the clear irony of Miss McCarthy's Horatian epigraph[2] points to *her* central weakness as well. The existence of this world does not make a substantial impression on us because its details usurp that force. But, let us try to imagine Miss Clark inventing a place like Rome. We know that first of all she would have to take for granted the life and meaning of her invented place, without the proof of detail. Then, the history, *ethos,* monuments, vocabulary, the involvement with ideas, would all follow and spring into being from the initial assumption of life. Of course, we don't complain that Rome, Paris, London, and the other institutions of our culture already carry sufficient weight in themselves, that they can be used as they are, in all their power of existing. We find it fortunate that *everything* doesn't need to be invented; otherwise, all our novels might be utopian. But the imaginative invention makes exactly those demands, it needs all the attributes of power and meaning that we assign to the institutions of our experience, so that the invention of a place like Rome should serve as a kind of theoretical model of the creative activity. The world that is assumed in fiction must have all the difficulty, the largeness, the com-

[2] *Atque inter silvas academi quaerere verum.* Epistles II, ii 45.

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plexity that our imaginations require; we can be satisfied with nothing less than the assumption of complete life, and that is just what Miss McCarthy can never assume. Her alternative is an easy and bad anthropology; everything is understood in its simple form by a satire that cannot sustain real contradictions. Whatever is contrary becomes grotesque; whatever is uncertain or unclear we find reduced to its most obvious signs. Nothing—no motive, no feeling, no past—remains unknown or unknowable; there can be no admission, as in Miss Clark's book, that something is complex or difficult to understand or impossible. Even the style for which Miss McCarthy is known exhibits this impulse to easy satisfaction—as when the "conspicuous whiteness and evenness" of a woman's teeth "gave her beauty an incisory quality", or when "brave tears of oratory" rise into someone's "forensic eyes". She appropriates ideas as if they were motives—the bad ones are more powerful than the good ones, and easier to handle; and her rapid delineations, her practiced summaries, suggest what may be one of the sources of her satire: an impatience with ideas when they are fallible, when they resist the pace of her understanding.

The reality that yields to simple fictional solutions is no less sentimental when evil, rather than bland goodness, is seen everywhere; and Miss McCarthy's reality is always sentimental in just this sense. The evil motive, the underlying self-interest, the desire for power become the *real* reality. Trained to look for them, Miss McCarthy ferrets them out, and, with what she thinks is pitiless honesty, asserts that everything else is useless illusion. There is never any question about the illusion; the real things are always underneath, usually hidden, and when they are uncovered, there is nothing else to be seen. Thus, the poetry conference at her progressive college is made a sham (as is the college itself, of course) when the motives of its directors are revealed; poets are charlatans when they attend such conferences; poetry is something of a fraud because such poets write it; students are by definition ludicrous; education is a vast hoax because it is so vulnerable, and ideas are only rationalizations, in the vulgar, pejorative sense. Miss McCarthy's short-cut view of the human condition makes everything absurd, and allows her to see her subject only as it welcomes this easy delineation. She is uninterested in things that cannot be shown as shabby; in fact, she doesn't see them, she seizes the absurd and insists that there is nothing else to see.

Eleanor Clark can assume a more complicated reality in her book about Rome, and, with a more flexible imagination, she can resist the easy satisfactions that tempt Miss McCarthy. Perhaps it is her central question that allows her to leave contradictions unsolved, and motives entangled. In asking " 'Ecco Roma' . . . Where? which Rome? who is seeing it? at what time of day?", both Rome and her feelings about it remain sufficiently complicated to be always interesting, especially because it seems to be the best question to ask about Rome. She starts by suggesting all the points from which you can try to see

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Rome, the ways to arrive, the places to sit or to start from, and these are at the same time specific places in Rome as well as sites for the departure of the imagination. In this city "nothing is single or simple", and no point of view can be complete. Miss Clark frames all she sees with the comments of a partial awareness: "but that is only part of it", or "you could start anywhere, it really doesn't matter, you will see so little anyway". Or, with a sense of the history of points of view about Rome, she notes "Not that there is any good approach or possible start at all, really, in this wide jungle, though it seems it was not always so strange and difficult as now"; and then, suddenly, there are Dickens, Dr. Arnold, Hawthorne, and Stendhal, and Miss Clark says "It is delightful to think of them all". But an attitude must be found for thinking about tourists, too, and movie stars, guides, officials, the Romans themselves; there are not only the "types" and the absurdities, and the people of the past. Because Rome can be assumed, and does not need to be invented, Miss Clark can afford to be fragmentary and suggestive; what might seem an inability to choose among perceptions begins to be a virtue, because anything less than this incessant complication would be unsatisfactory. Even the varieties in syntax and tone, the occasionally repellent or intemperate urgency, the brutal flatness, seem to be appropriate attempts to imitate and take possession of a part of the subject.

Miss Clark's methods are close to those of experience: the things she sees in Rome are not always logical, organized, or reasonable, nor can they always be understood; more often they are confused, moving and stupid at the same time, unnecessary and yet full of associations. Rome has some of the effects of an enormous collage in which all of the elements demand to be related: Giuliano, the Sicilian bandit, shot in 1950, and the Emperor Hadrian, haunting Tivoli; Virgil and Augustus, and Mussolini and Matteoti; nineteenth century archaeologists and the Empire; and the bronze Sitting Boxer seems like a Hemingway character; what do they "do" to each other? how can they all be related? One of the ways, Miss Clark seems to say, is not to assume that any single conjunction tells more than any other—not to inflate the value of monuments, for example, because "everything you came to revere turns up in a setting as of some huge practical joke", but then not to make too much of *that*. An assumption of innumerable elements existing in infinite relations—light, color, water, buildings, people, glories, infamies—allows her to make use of casual and serious devices for organizing experience. A section describing the fountains of Rome seems also to tell much about water and light in human as well as architectural design; a section on the cats in Rome suggests a way to think about certain buildings, and about the past, because the cats, too, provide that continuity. There will be a breathless tour through the Raphael rooms at the Vatican, a fascinating *mélange*, in the crowded rushing confusion almost an imitation of the experience itself, and it will be even more effective when you see that the passage opened with this note: "*Raphael*. Died, aged 37, of over-

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work." A sense of the difficulty of seeing everything in all this richness and extravagance will be aroused by a minor note sounded in passing: "somebody should put in an electric light, but you can't expect them to worry about every single Raphael". Then there are interesting sections on the palaces—the stories about their inhabitants and their history, and of their present uses, for example, the Palazzo Farnese used as a movie set. And even when the churches do not suggest it, there is Catholicism, as a force, and as something to be related to the relics, the miracles, the pilgrims, the nuns and priests (who seem shocking), and anti-clericalism. Miss Clark's sense of American attitudes toward Catholicism, and of American ambiguity expressed in the guilty appreciation of churches, enables her to note special qualities about Roman religiosity: "what seems dishonest in an Anglo-Saxon mind often does not in an Italian one". She can be evocative by commenting on the number of plants that grew in the Colosseum in 1855 and the number that grow there now, or by listing the variety of names for marble, most of them qualified by the word "antica". Details of this minor sort support Miss Clark's more serious insights; the various kinds of *antica* marble used in Hadrian's villa make an equally tangible comment on this Rome "where life at every instant is a meeting point of all time past and future".

For this is what all the relations must mean, and Miss Clark uses whatever she sees as if it were an analogy on the historicity, the magnificence, and the intricacy of Rome. Hadrian, "a character more complex than any in Proust", had to go some miles away from Rome, to Tivoli, in order to build his fantastic villa and preserve his ambiguous relation to Rome. Giuliano, the young bandit, wanted to make Sicily the 49th American state, was an exaggerated kind of Robin Hood, and, when he died, became a legend. His power is different from Hadrian's—immediate, rather than of the past, and informal—but it, too, echoed in Rome. The Holy Year Jubilee, in 1950, suggests another meeting-point for power and the past, a matrix of contradictions, and an occasion for the display of continuity. It was a ceremonial, involving all the elements, ignorance as well as power and glory. And, again, as in all of Miss Clark's analogies, it is a comparative remoteness in the relation, the *distance* from Rome, that seems so meaningful, for it was the pilgrims who made the Jubilee such a success. In the last chapter, on G. G. Belli, the only Roman poet (he wrote in Roman speech, and is not well-known, although Gogol and Joyce knew and admired his work), Miss Clark tries to suggest why there have been no Roman writers, why the celebration of Rome has been left to outsiders:

> Its genius had all been plastic and decorative, for the eye; it expressed itself in stones, furnishings, water, spaces of every kind; in words it could inspire all manner of appreciations from outsiders but to itself, literarily speaking, Rome was a blank. Its soul was a mass soul; it was too busy being Rome; besides there was no independent middle class.

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Belli's series of more than two thousand conversational sonnets represents, for Miss Clark, the public and satiric nature of Rome; her informal sociology of poetry suggests the variety of problems encountered by the Roman writing about Rome in the nineteenth century, when Belli lived—its characters limited to the Church, the people, and the aristocracy; its forms, the obscene ballad and the political epigram; its images of Caesar and God always suggesting contradiction and unity. Miss Clark has learned a great deal from Belli, and it is appropriate that we come upon him after Hadrian, after the Jubilee, after the fountains and the churches.

Like Belli's, Miss Clark's talent is dramatic, and requires variety to develop. The spectacle, and her role, as a kind of impresario, demand that she be more than shocked or priggish about the power of Catholicism (not always benign), and, as well, dissatisfied by the anti-clericalism. Her imagination is not limited; its work is not completed when she notices the conjunction of filth and glory—she suggests that they complement each other in some intimate relation, that if the conjunction is there, it is to be noticed, and that it must be meaningful, but without precluding other kinds of meaning. She never insists that because Fascism is still real everything else is unmasked as a sham; the Sistine Chapel does not become a lie because Mussolini's buildings still stand. Sexuality is vividly present in Rome, too—in the air that seems to have a sexual gaiety about it, in the fountains, in Belli's amazing sonnets, in the crush of the streets, in perversion, and all over Hadrian's villa at Tivoli ("No man who was loved, or was easy in the lack of love, could have built such a house; among the gods and temples strewn about the place there is one real invisible altar, and that is to romantic sexual love, which is a version of the glorified Self"). But, in this, as in everything else, Miss Clark sees that magnificence means, intricately, many things—and some of them are evil, ugliness, perversion, excessive will, elements of life that cannot be satirized out of existence or made the summary of the human condition.

Among the many things Miss Clark noticed at Tivoli, there was a "tremendous speckled pig wallowing in a stubby relic of one of Hadrian's buildings", but she didn't make it carry too much meaning. This brings to mind Ortega y Gasset's comments on the way we are affected by such scenes of violation—how we are tempted by the vision of Leda and the swan, Pasiphae and the bull, Antiope and the goat, responding too quickly or too easily to the ruined landscape "where the civilized, geometric stone is stifled beneath the embrace of wild vegetation", and how we are led to see this violation as final. And one thinks of Miss McCarthy here, too—how much this is a description of *her* response, how life itself is for her such a scene of violation. Among the ruins of Hadrian's magnificent place, Miss McCarthy, we feel, would see only the pig; he would be more meaningful than the villa. Miss Clark, however, can see it all, and even see Marcus Aurelius there later, on a visit; her great gift is an imagination that is not exhausted once it has registered the pig.

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A COMMUNICATION

In the Spring issue of THE HUDSON REVIEW an article appeared entitled "English Literary Magazines". The author was Mr. Geoffrey Rans. In this article Mr. Rans gave it as his opinion that British literary periodicals were very poor indeed at this time. He dismissed most of the magazines in a few words and concentrated his remarks on *Scrutiny*, which with a few reservations he praised highly, and *Nine*, which he said had the makings of greatness but failed miserably. This is a rather crude summary of Mr. Rans' ideas but must suffice for an opening paragraph.

At first glance Mr. Rans' criticisms appear to be very fair, even as far as they go, correct, save for his exaggerated rating of *Scrutiny*. On second consideration, however, I see a number of serious weaknesses in his attitude. I entirely agree with him about the deficiencies of *The Cornhill*, *The Adelphi* and *New Writing*, but I think he is wrong to class with these literary miscellanies the solemnly purposeful *The Wind and the Rain*. This latter periodical, edited by Mr. Neville Braybrooke, is often a little heavy but is altogether a more serious and worthy publication than the other three. Furthermore, Mr. Rans never mentions what is undoubtedly the finest literary periodical being published in Great Britain today, *The Month*; and I would add that it is the more surprising that in these difficult days the only really good literary paper being produced should also be the only *monthly* review, the remainder being either quarterly or merely sporadic.

Mr. Rans' first castigation of *Nine* is not a very surprising one. Quite late on in *Nine's* career, with the publication of the fifth issue, a new editorial policy was announced, namely, to "re-plot the traditions of European literature" in order the better to understand the present. Mr. Rans attacks *Nine* for not having done this but bases his evidence on previous issues of the magazine which do not profess even to attempt this enormous task. In any case, of course, there is bound to be a wide gap between principles such as these and practice. The only way surely to "re-plot the traditions of European literature" would be to edit completely new and voluminous histories of various European art forms and critical theories. A quarterly review like *Nine* can do much to suggest neglected values in past literature by presenting critical or descriptive articles, shorter "squibs" and translations (generally accompanied by the original text) side by side with contemporary creative writing. That consideration of the past as a literary force should be alloyed in *Nine* with contemporary writing is surely a proof of the existence of a valuable unified view of literature in general. *Nine's* method of carrying out this ambitious programme is, briefly, to publish once a year an issue devoted to a special period. Autumn 1951 (104 pp.) was devoted to studies in Renaissance poetry. Autumn 1952 is to be devoted to Latin poetry. These issues are not mere antiquarianism or scholarly journalism, but attempts to show how certain types of poetry have been

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neglected and how they could well teach practising writers today to write better. The neglect (if not contempt) by influential critics in our time of Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso and Camoens (to name but a few) surely needed to be off-set by even an elementary consideration of the extraordinarily rich and varied poetry of that period. If in this issue of *Nine* a complete literary history of the period has not been provided and a total revaluation in critical terms has not been reached it need hardly surprise even the most hard-bitten of "critics"!

Mr. Rans objects more strongly still to *Nine's* habit of "literary sniping". There are ways in which such sniping can be valuable and ways in which it can be merely bad manners. My own opinion is that both types of literary attack have been made in *Nine,* but that comparatively early in its career the bad manners element is being reduced and the tendency strengthened to attack seriously on sound and justifiable principles. Mr. Campbell's brilliant and witty attack on Auden could hardly be taken as a final critical evaluation of Auden's works; but the article (in *Nine* No. 5) analyses so acutely a certain type of squalid sloppiness in modern literature—a psychological namby pambiness which originated in Bloomsbury in the early part of the century and spread to the younger generation in the 1920's and 30's—that it actually has far more value than any polite and considered "book review" of Auden's collected poems. Plenty of sound reviews of this book appeared around that time and as editor I considered it far more important to have a *truly* critical statement like Mr. Campbell's than mere journalistic repetition. Mr. Campbell is not only one of the finest of living poets but is himself a remarkable if individualistic critic of modern manners and men. The article is valuable not only as a criticism of Auden but as one of the best pieces of invective written by Campbell in his long career of literary onslaught.

Mr. Rans then objects to a reference to Mr. Leavis as being "insidious". He appears to take great personal offence at this remark. "That they do not agree with Leavis is one thing; to abuse him is quite another, especially when *Nine* has so much to learn from him in the matter of effective criticism. To call Leavis insidious is plain silly, if not illiterate." Whatever abuse Leavis may deserve, I hardly think that calling a man "insidious" can really rank as abuse and I see nothing "silly" or "illiterate" about *that.* I shall have more to say on this matter in a subsequent paragraph. But surely Mr. Rans is hardly practising what he preaches when he makes a statement like this without substantiating it at all. His next objection to *Nine* is its "critical laziness". Apart from quoting one or two phrases out of context he does not give any examples, but it is evident that what he is really worried by is the fact that *Nine* is not primarily concerned with criticism. *Nine's* interests are first in creative writing. He also objects that the creative writing chosen in *Nine* is a sort of "Hit Parade" rather than a grouping of material which all adds up to some sort of dogmatic unity. He then goes on to say that the most valuable part of *Nine*

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is its review section. If *Nine's* criticism is so vague and unsatisfactory to Mr. Rans it is surely rather inconsistent to value the critical reviews at all.

Such then are Mr. Rans' objections to *Nine*. The most probable reasons for these objections are immediately betrayed by his list of what he considers to be *Scrutiny's* virtures. *Scrutiny*, he writes, "was a counterblast to a Bloomsbury which regarded literature as a social grace; *Scrutiny* did not find it embarrassing to care enough about literature to want to give serious work serious consideration; it did not find Strachey's mockery of Matthew Arnold the least bit amusing." One can immediately see that what Mr. Rans likes is pomposity and moral earnestness (what I personally would call the insufferably crabbed puritanism of *Scrutiny*!). This is perhaps confirmed by the fact that in England Leavis has never really been accepted save in the ranks of secondary school teachers and the younger undergraduates, where interest is naturally greater in moral than in literary problems. Mr. Rans is of the opinion that Leavis has a much greater influence in the U. S. A. than in Great Britain. That may be so. With its infinite capacity for creation the United States is nevertheless "gullible" in a way in which we dull English could never be. The earnestness of the Americans I meet is open, frank, healthy and attractive. The Englishman's earnestness has about it a crabbed, mean quality which is very different indeed, but probably not easily recognisable by the American. Leavis is obviously a serious character, his influence considerable if not overt. His bad manners have cut him off from the literary world, his vices have vitiated his virtues, yet his opinions crop up in unexpected places. That is why he seems to me to be "insidious". Mr. Rans goes on to say that "as a purely critical journal *Scrutiny* has no equal." Here he lets the cat out of the bag. Who but a fool, an uneducated school teacher or a robot of pure intellect, would want a "purely critical journal"? Mr. Rans' critics seem to be so critical that they would exclude everything—fiction, phantasy and poetry—save criticisms, as indeed *Scrutiny* does. Of the few critics who really have something to say, at least half are also poets or creative writers of some sort—the names of Eliot, Pound, D. H. Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis and Empson immediately come to my mind. Literature *is* a social grace—just as music and painting are. In more cultivated societies (not necessarily more moral ones!) such as the Elizabethan, every gentleman was expected to sing if not to compose, to write verse and at least to distinguish the good from the bad in painting. The peasantry and the town proletariat had their own flourishing folk cultures. Today, thanks to the political sell out by the middle classes of the twenties and thirties, social graces no longer exist. An ugly levelling democracy concerned with dragging everything down to the lowest common denominator in the name of "society" has forced the social graces and the arts into the universities (where they are swamped by academic careerism), into large scale commercial exploitation, or into little minority groups who struggle on somehow and for various reasons keep the arts alive. Overspecialisation, departmentalising (i.e. B.B.C. and Arts

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Council "poetry"), criticising, are useless to improve the arts, when the circumstances in which the arts can flourish do not exist. It is this that Leavis and his tribe do not see. They are so shortsighted, so smallminded that they resent true greatness and (in the fashion of 30 years ago) go for the little things. They still think Marvell greater than Milton—an old chestnut which keeps coming up in the tortured conversation of Leavis's followers.

Nine's first preoccupation is with contemporary poetry and in the fostering of it. Publishing poetry purely on its merits (what Mr. Rans calls a Hit Parade) is surely not a bad principle. I have always avoided publishing poetry which seems either by its style or content actually to betray the true intentions of *Nine,* even if it seemed "well-written" or was by a well-known writer; but apart from that, I have accepted the best I could find. My view of the function of criticism in *Nine* has been that it should encourage readers to read certain books and discourage them from others. What books should be encouraged and discouraged is naturally a matter of opinion. I have thrust before *Nine's* readers authors whose attitudes are healthy, positive and enjoyable, and put aside the morbid and the dreary. I have as far as possible tried to keep my editorial eye on the great authors of the great periods, rather than the minor, and I have suggested study of neglected masterpieces (e.g. Gavin Douglas's *Aeneid,* William Barnes's poetry, Camoens' Lyrics). Such purposes seem to me to be more important than the hairsplitting and agonising which Mr. Rans calls critical thoroughness. To get people to know and read the best books and help them to see through the fashionable and the spurious, has been my idea, rather than to tell the public the last critical word about what they must all have read several times. To broaden the public's mind not to narrow it. To start them on contemporary poetry and lead them to Italian literature to Dante, Cavalcanti, to the Renaissance, to the Greek and Roman Classics, to a unified view of Medieval "barbarian" literature, and later to Welsh, Irish and Scottish literature. To avoid sloppiness, moral cowardice, degeneracy (however exciting!), affectedness, obscurity, psychological case books, misery-mongering, and go for the finished work of art—the story which is good as a story and not as something else (e.g. a source for medical research!), a poem which is good as a *poem*—music which delights as *music* and not as a mere aphrodisiac or stimulus to luxuriant hypochondria. To avoid the *complex* (a modern craze) when the simple will do. To enjoy the arts as *arts* and not to use them as a springboard for indulging personal weaknesses—sadism, egomania, narcissistic fancy, erotic phantasy, guilt complexes, intellectual virtuosity or obscurantist boorishness.

Criticism is not a school subject only, it is a part of life and I do not believe that it can only be taught in the universities. Its highest object can but be to get people to read, profit by and enjoy to the full the very best books. Such enjoyment and profit is not a mere literary accomplishment or a mere critical triumph, but something added to man's physical and spiritual life.

PETER RUSSELL
Editor of *Nine.*

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